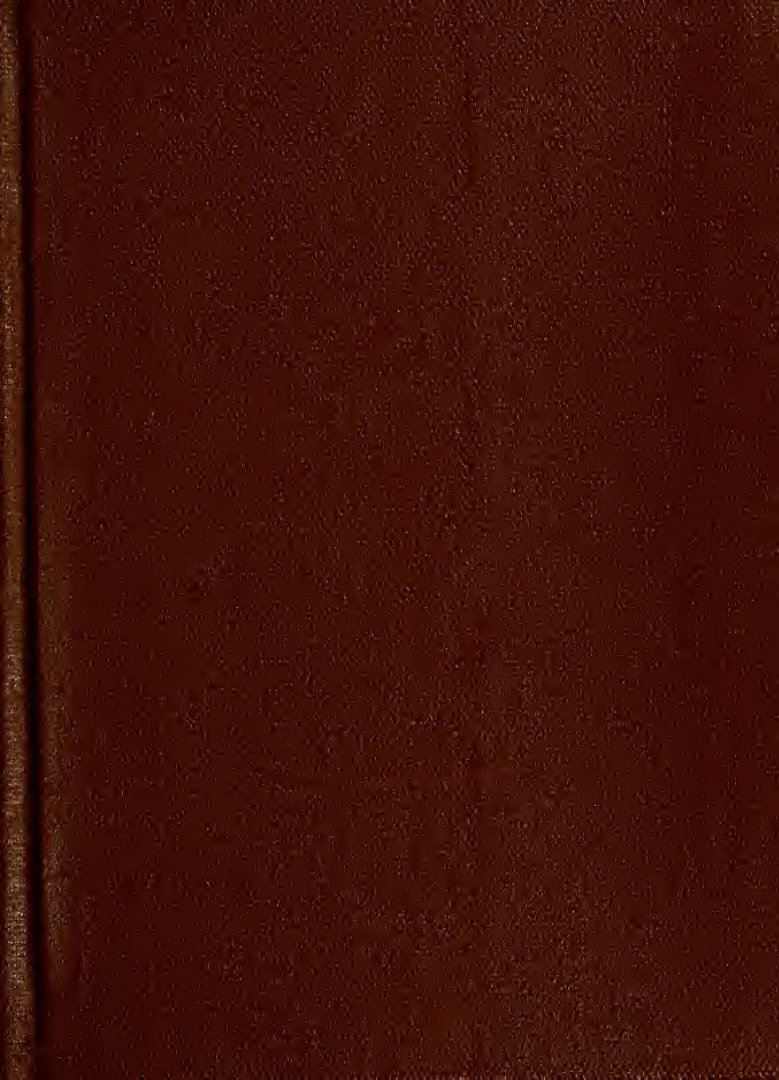
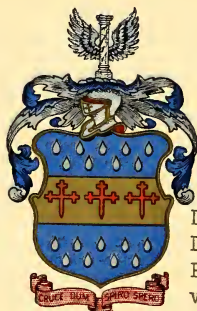




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KNIGHT'S MISCELLANIES.

PASTON LETTERS.

VOL. I.

PASTON LETTERS.

ORIGINAL LETTERS,

WRITTEN DURING THE REIGNS OF

HENRY VI., EDWARD IV., AND RICHARD III.

BY

VARIOUS PERSONS OF RANK OR CONSEQUENCE:

CONTAINING MANY

CURIOUS ANECDOTES, RELATIVE TO THAT TURBULENT AND BLOODY,
BUT HITHERTO DARK, PERIOD OF OUR HISTORY;

AND ELUCIDATING NOT ONLY

PUBLIC MATTERS OF STATE, BUT LIKEWISE THE PRIVATE MANNERS OF THE AGE.

WITH

NOTES HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY;

AND AUTHENTICATED BY ENGRAVINGS OF AUTOGRAPHS AND SEALS.

By JOHN FENN, Esq., M.A., F.A.S.

A NEW EDITION,

IN WHICH THE LESS IMPORTANT LETTERS ARE ABRIDGED; THE WHOLE SERIES IS DIGESTED IN
CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, AND ADDITIONS MADE TO THE NOTES OF THE ORIGINAL EDITOR:

By A. RAMSAY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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C O N T E N T S.

Letter	Page
INTRODUCTION	xiii
Articles declaring how the Earl of Warwick took the charge of King Henry VI. . .	xx
A Petition to the Commouns of England against Sir William Paston, Knight, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, by William Dalling	xxiv
1. Katharine, Duchess of Norfolk, to John Paston, Esq.	1
2. Agnes Paston to Sir William Paston	1
3. Robert Repps to John Paston	2
4. Markaryte Paston to John Paston	3
5. M. Paston to John Paston	4
6. James Gresham to Sir William Paston.	5
7. John Gyney (Jenney) to Sir William Paston	5
8. John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, to John Paston	5
9. John Northwood to Lord John Viscount Beaumont	6
10. Agnes Paston to Edmund Paston	7
11. John Hauteyn to the Archbishop of Canterbury	7
12. Sir Roger Chamberlyn to Agnes Paston	8
13. Agnes Paston to John Paston	8
14. Sir John Fastolf to Stephen Scroope	8
15. Humphrey Duke of Buckingham to Viscount Beaumont	9
16. William Yelverton to John Paston, Esq.	10
17. Agnes Paston to John Paston	11
18. Sir Robert Williamson to Agnes Paston	12
19. William Yelverton to Sir John Fastolf	12
20. Margaret Paston to John Paston	13
21. James Gresham to John Paston, Esq.	15
22. Copy of Articles of Impeachment exhibited against the Duke of Suffolk . . .	15
23. M. Paston to John Paston	16
24. Robert, Prior of Bromholm, to John Paston	16
25. M. Paston to John Paston	16
26. The Duke of Suffolk to his son	17
27. William Lomner to John Paston.	18
28. John Crane to John Paston, Esq.	20
29. Sir John Fastolf to Sir Thomas Howys.	20
30. J. Payn to John Paston	21
31. James Gresham to John Paston, Esq.	23
32. Sir John Fastolf to Sir Thomas Howys and William Barker	24
33. James Gresham to John Paston	24
34. J. Damme and J. Gresham to John Paston	25
35. Sir John Fastolf to Sir Thomas Howys and John Bocking	25
36. The Earl of Oxford to J. Jermyn, Sheriff of Norfolk	25

37. The speech of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, against Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, in the House of Lords	26
38. Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Castlecomb, to Sir John Fastolf	28
39. Margaret Paston to John Paston	29
40. William Worcester to John Paston	30
41. Sir John Fastolf to Sir Thomas Howys	31
42. Petition of Richard Duke of York to the King	32
43. J. Bocking to William Wayte	32
44. The Earl of Oxford to John Paston	33
45. J. Wyngfield to John Paston, Esq.	33
46. Sir John Heveningham to Margaret Paston	34
47. Alice Crane to Margaret Paston	35
48. Richard Calle to John Paston	35
49. William Wayte to John Paston	36
50. Agnes Paston to John Paston	38
51. Margaret Paston to John Paston	39
52. Margaret Paston to John Paston	40
53. Margaret Paston to John Paston	41
54. Name unknown to John Paston	42
55. William Paston to John Paston	43
56. Memorial to the King	43
57. Agnes Paston to John Paston	44
58. Margaret Paston to John Paston	45
59. Agnes Paston to John Paston	46
60. John Clopton to John Paston	46
61. Marriage Articles between Agnes Paston, &c. on one part, and William Clopton, Esq., on the other	47
62. Lord Scales to John Paston, Esq.	48
63. William Worcester (Botoner) to John Paston	49
64. Agnes Paston to John Paston	49
65. Elizabeth Clere to John Paston	49
66. R. Dollay to John Paston	51
67. Edmond Grey, Lord of Hastings, Waiford, and Ruthyn, to J. Paston, Esq.. . . .	52
68. John Paston to Lord Grey	52
69. William Paston to John Paston	53
70. Sir John Fastolf to John Paston	54
71. Thomas Howys to John Paston	55
72. Edmund Clere to John Paston	56
73. Sir John Fastolf to John Paston	57
74. John Martin, Abbot of St. Benedict's, to John Paston	57
75. Margaret Paston to John Paston	57
76. Richard Earl of Warwick to Sir Thomas Todenham.	58
77. Richard Earl of Warwick to John Paston, Esq.	59
78. The Duke of York to John Paston, Esq.	60

CONTENTS.

vii

Page

Letter

79. The Duchess of Norfolk to John Paston, Esq.	60
80. The Earl of Oxford to John Paston	61
81. John Crane to John Paston	61
82. W. B. to W. Worcester	62
83. John Jenney to John Paston, Esq.	63
84. Henry Windsor to John Bocking and William Worcester	64
85. The Earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury to the Mayors, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, &c. of Norfolk.	65
86. The Bishop of Lincoln to John Paston, Esq.	66
87. Proclamation of the Duke of Norfolk	66
88. James Gresham to John Paston	67
89. Margaret Paston to John Paston	69
90. William Botoner (Worcester) to John Paston	69
91. Sir John Fastolf to John Paston, John Bocking, or William Barker.	70
92. Sums of money due to Sir John Fastolf from the Crown	71
93. A Declaration of the Costs of Sir John Fastolf	73
94. The Archbishop of Canterbury to Sir John Fastolf	74
95. The Archbishop of Canterbury to John Paston, Esq., and William Norwich	75
96. Henry Windsor to John Paston	75
97. John Lord Lovel to his father Lord Beaumont	76
98. William Tailboys to Lord Beaumont	77
99. Margaret Paston to John Paston, Esq.	78
100. Alice Ogard to John Paston, Esq.	79
101. William Botoner (Worcester) to John Paston	79
102. William Botoner (Worcester) to John Paston, Esq.	80
103. John Bocking to John Paston	81
104. John Bocking to John Paston	82
105. Lord Scales to John Paston	82
106. William Botoner (Worcester) to John Paston	82
107. Errands to London of Agnes Paston	83
108. The Earl of Salisbury to Viscount Beaumont	83
109. William Botoner (Worcester) to Sir John Fastolf	85
110. Agnes Paston to John Paston	85
111. John Bocking to Sir John Fastolf	85
112. John Osbern to John Paston	86
113. Margaret Paston to John Paston	88
114. Robert Hungerford, Lord Molyns, to his tenants	89
115. Lord Molyns to the Bishop of Winchester	89
116. John Jernyngan to Magaret Paston	90
117. Thomas Denyes to John Paston	91
118. William Worcester (Botoner) to John Paston	91
119. Sir Thomas Howes to John Paston, Esq.	92
120. Sir John Fastolf to John Paston	92
121. Henry Fylungley to Sir John Fastolf.	93

Letter	age
122. Henry Wyndesore to John Paston	94
123. Margaret Paston to John Paston	94
124. Elizabeth Poonyngs to Agnes Paston	95
125. Hugh a Fenn to John Paston	96
126. John Paston to his father John Paston, Esq.	96
127. Sir John Fastolf to the Duke of Norfolk	97
128. Margaret Paston to John Paston	98
129. Dr. John Brackley to John Paston	98
130. Dr. John Brackley to John Paston	99
131. William Paston to John Paston	100
132. Wm. Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, to Sir John Fastolf's other Executors	102
133. John Boeking to William Velverton, John Paston, and Henry Filongley	103
134. William Botoner (called Wyrcester) to John Berneye, Esq.	104
135. William Paston to John Paston	105
136. The Earl of Oxford to John Paston, Esq.	105
137. The King to John Paston, Esq.	106
138. Lord Scales to John Paston, Esq.	107
139. Richard Southwell to John Paston, Esq.	107
140. The Duchess of Norfolk to Viscount Beaumont	108
141. Margaret Paston to John Paston	108
142. Richard Southwell to John Paston	110
143. John Jenuey to John Paston, Esq.	110
144. Christopher Hausson to John Paston	111
145. John Brackley to John Paston, Esq.	111
146. John Brackley to John Paston	112
147. An ancient Whitsunday Sermon preached by Friar Brackley	112
148. The Abbot of Langley to John Stokes	114
149. The Prior of Bromholm to John Paston, Esq.	114
150. Clement Paston to John Paston	115
151. The Prior of Bromholm to John Paston, Esq.	116
152. Margaret Paston to John Paston	117
153. Margaret Paston to John Paston the elder	118
154. Robert Weynington to Thomas Daniel, Esq.	119
155. William Naunton to John Paston, Esq.	120
156. A Brother of the Order of the Temple of Syon to John Paston	121
157. Margaret Paston to John Paston	122
158. Edmond Paston to John Paston	123
159. Richard Calle to John Paston	123
160. William Pryce to John Paston	124
161. Perse to Sir Robert Rokesby	124
162. William Paston to John Paston	127
163. Thomas Playters to John Paston, Esq.	128
164. Thomas Playters to John Paston, Esq.	129
165. John Paston to Unknown	130

CONTENTS.

Letter	ix
Page	
166. Thomas Playters to John Paston	131
167. Richard Calle to John Paston	131
168. James Gresham to John Paston	132
169. Thomas Denyes to John Paston	133
170. Margaret Paston to John Paston	134
171. Thomas Denyes to Margaret Paston or William Paston	134
172. John Berney to John Paston or William Rokewoode, Esq.	135
173. John Paston to Margaret Paston	136
174. Margaret Paston to John Paston	136
175. John Berney to John Paston and William Rokewood, Esq.	137
176. John Berney to John Paston, Esq.	138
177. Margaret Paston to John Paston	138
178. James Gloys to John Paston	139
179. John Paston to Margaret Paston	140
180. William Jemey to John Paston, Esq.	140
181. John Russe to John Paston	141
182. John Paston to his father John Paston, Esq.	142
183. Clement Paston to John Paston	144
184. James Gloys to John Paston, Esq. ^{me}	145
185. Henry Wyndesore to John Paston, Esq.	145
186. Lord Hungerford and Sir R. Whityngham to Queen Margaret	146
187. The Confession of Sixteen Frenchmen, with the Master, taken at Sheringham in ; Norfolk the third week of Lent	147
188. The Duke of Norfolk to John Paston, Esq.	148
189. Unknown to John Paston	148
190. Sir Thomas Howes to John Paston	149
191. Richard Calle to John Paston	150
192. James Gresham to John Paston, Esq.	151
193. John Wykes to John Paston, Esq.	151
194. John Davy to John Paston	152
195. John Paston to his father John Paston	152
196. Margaret Paston to John Paston	154
197. John Paston to Margaret Paston	155
198. J. Beauchamp to Sir Thomas Howes	156
199. Sir George Browne to John Paston, Esq.	157
200. John Paston to his father John Paston	157
201. Unknown to Margaret Paston	158
202. Margaret Paston to John Paston	158
203. Elizabeth Mundeford to John Paston, Esq.	159
204. John Russe to John Paston	160
205. Friar John Mowth to John Paston the oldest	161
206. John Russe to John Paston	161
207. John Russe to John Paston	162
208. John Paston to Margaret Paston	163

209. John Russe to John Paston	164
210. Thomas Playters to John Paston the eldest	165
211. John Paston to his father John Paston	165
212. Thomas Playters to John Paston	166
213. John Paston to his father John Paston	166
214. R. C. V. C. to John Paston the eldest	167
215. James Gresham to Margaret Paston	167
216. John Wykes to Margaret Paston	168
217. J. Daubeney to John Paston	169
218. Richard Calle to John Paston, the younger	170
219. Abbot of Langley to Sir John Paston	171
220. John Paston the youngest, to his elder brother John Paston	171
221. Margaret Paston to John Paston	173
222. James Gresham to John Paston	174
223. Henry Berry to John Paston, Esq.	175
224. John Pampynge to John Paston, the eldest, Esq.	176
225. John Paston the youngest, to his father John Paston	178
226. Margaret Paston to John Paston the oldest	178
227. Margaret Paston to Sir John Paston	179
228. Thomas Daverse to Sir John Paston	180
229. Margaret Paston to John Paston	181
230. Appointment of the King for the foundation of a College at Caister	182
231. Margaret Paston to John Paston	183
232. Margaret Paston to John Paston	184
233. Margaret Paston to John Paston	186
234. Margaret Paston to John Paston	187
235. Richard Calle to John Paston	188
236. Margaret Paston to John Paston	189
237. John Paston the youngest to Margaret Paston	190
238. Margaret Paston to John Paston	191
239. Margaret Paston to John Paston, Esq.	192
240. J. Wymondham to John Paston	193
241. Sir John Felbrigge to John Paston	194
242. John Wykes to Sir John Paston	195
243. The Duke of Norfolk to John Paston the elder	196
244. Margaret Paston to John Paston	196
245. Roger Taverham to John Paston, Esq.	197
246. Roger Taverham to John Paston, Esq.	198
247. B. D. M. S. to John Paston	199
248. Sir John Paston to Margaret Paston	199



[Henry VI. in his Youth.]

From Picture in King's College, Cambridge.

INTRODUCTION.

THE only printed edition of these valuable records of a past age is in four quarto volumes, edited and published by Sir John Fenn, two volumes in 1787, and two others in 1789; together with a fifth, prepared by him for publication, but not published till 1823, many years after his death, by his nephew, William Frere, Master of Downing College, Cambridge. This last volume contains letters of the dates of Edward IV., Edward V., Richard III., and Henry VII. The letters in each publication are arranged in a separate chronological series, although many of them refer to the same periods. This edition is of course far too expensive for the great mass of readers; the cost of a copy is eight guineas, and it is troublesome to follow the proper order of succession under such an arrangement. This has occasioned the present attempt to make such valuable matter more accessible, by reprinting the volumes in a cheap form, and in a more regular order, abridging some of the letters which are either of little importance or repetitions of what is contained in others, or relating to uncontested and well-known historical events involving no matters of peculiar or personal interest; but wherever we have deemed it right to abridge or abstract we have in every case preserved as much of the original form and language as possible. In the original edition two forms of the letters are given, one an exact transcript of the letters themselves in the old and very variable and therefore difficult orthography; and the other, which we have followed, with the orthography modernised, but no liberty has been taken, without notice, of either the words or their arrangement.

In a recent number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' in an article reviewing Mr. Tytler's work 'England under the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary,' in which were introduced many historical documents and private letters of the period, it was contended that such a work could not be popular, nor deserved to be so. The reviewer argued, that general readers could not be expected to take the pains or feel sufficient interest to examine into details; and in the few cases where they did, they should themselves have recourse to the originals; for selections, copied at the risk of error in transcription, and modernised in the spelling, were likely to convey false impressions frequently of the facts related, and still more frequently of the modes of thought and expression used by our ancestors.

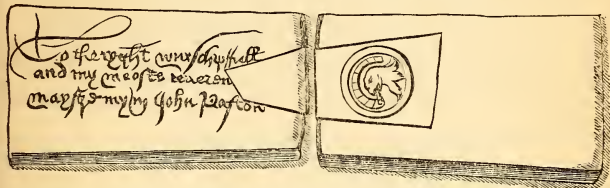
We believe the opinions here expressed are held, or rather acted upon, by many who recoil from the idea of reading "historical documents" as they would from reading a modern act of parliament for a railroad or an inclosure. But the objections of the reviewer, if valid, would shut out the public entirely from *any* knowledge of these interesting pictures of our earlier history; for many of the collections of MSS. are not accessible to the public, and few or none could read them on account of the difficulties arising from the hand-writing, the contractions, and the ever-varying orthography. Fenn has in a subsequent paragraph given an answer to most of the items; but the only part of the objection of any weight—that history cannot be taught in this way—does not apply to this work. It is not historical, though occasionally touching

on public matters, but domestic; and it cannot but be pleasing to mark how the passions, feelings, modes of thought, and prejudices are acted upon by the political situation, institutions, and education of the age in which the writers lived. The ‘Original Letters written during the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III.,’ are not those of statesmen or mere politicians, but of men and women occasionally of course mixed up with public affairs, but treating of them only as affecting their private interest. “The artless writers of these letters,” says Sir John Fenn, the editor of these papers, “here communicate their private affairs, or relate the reports of the day; they tell their tale in the plain and uncouth phrase of the time; they aim not at shining by art or eloquence, and bespeak credit by total carelessness of correction and ornament.”¹ Indeed we have probably in no books so detailed and wholly unprejudiced a description as in these of the national domestic and social manners and modes of action and thought, together with the semi-public relations of the people, which, too minute for the notice of history, are even on that account the more popularly interesting, developing as they do the feelings and state of the most numerous classes in the country, and explaining and illumining incidentally much of the cause and course of many historical events. In many of these letters we see, or think we see, much of the peculiar principles which have distinguished us as a nation both before and since their date, and which, constantly instilled, have been constantly perpetuated:—untiring activity, indomitable resolution, and confident self-reliance, united to a full sense of the power and advantages of co-operation, producing a willingness to submit to the most implicit subordination for the attainment of a desired object, provided that object is kept steadily in view; and a readiness, if left alone, to act alone. In this collection we see how mothers thought there were things more to be dreaded for their sons than death; who “had leu (*rather*) they wer fayr beryed than lost for defeaute;” and it was doubtless from such sources that our forefathers were enabled to show “the mettle of their pasture,” and that they “were worth their breeding,” alike in the bloody conflicts of Agincourt, Trafalgar, or Waterloo, and in the civil contests of the time here spoken of, as in the more peaceable but not less arduous struggles for freedom in the houses of parliament and the courts of law. There was then as now the strong practical common sense, sometimes expressed, we hope and believe, more harshly in words than in acts. For although in the letters every marriage is made to rest upon the sole basis of property, we have little doubt that then, as now, this was only pursued in part so far as to ensure independence and comfort, and that the feelings of the parties were rarely if ever violated: although law-suits were prosecuted with great eagerness, and in cases of disputed title, with great violence, and all parties complain of delay, and injustice, and oppression, and corruption, yet the complaints seem generally to be, as now, the common language of all litigants, particularly of defeated ones: although men here avowedly change their political sides because they think they shall benefit themselves thereby, and seem more openly to consult prudence than principle, yet on the whole they seem as now to make their interests and principles usually to agree, and the letters being confidential, may account for the occasional openness and bluntness of expression.

It may be remarked that these letters afford little direct information as to the means of internal communication. Journeys appear to have been made usually on horseback and written communications were sent either by special messengers, or entrusted to persons about to travel,

¹ Original Edit. vol. i. p. xv.

letters being then immediately written in haste to such acquaintance or friends as might chance to reside near to such places as the traveller passed, or to which he was ultimately destined. We find many allusions in the letters here published to such opportunities having been embraced. Great care, however, seems to have been taken to preserve the integrity of the letter. It was carefully folded, and fastened at the end by a sort of paper strap, upon which the seal was affixed; and under the seal a string, a silk thread, or even a straw was frequently placed running around the letter. We give below a specimen, reduced in size, of the manner in which letters were folded and sealed; and many of the seals, selected from those given by Fenn, are introduced at the end of the letters to which they were attached,—an arrangement we have thought more satisfactory than giving them in one or two pages of plates:—



The limited means of communication must have operated much to the domestic discomfort of the time. It appears to have been a matter of course that a man leaving his home, whether on business or pleasure, must leave his family behind him, and that even a settled occupation in the capital, where the individuals had estates, interests, and connexions in the country, as in the case of the Pastons, Jenney and others, could not overcome the difficulties and inconveniences arising from a want of facility of movement and intercourse. We learn that there were carriers, but we are not told how their journeyings were regulated, but probably not on fixed days, or to any one appointed place, but depending on their getting a remunerating load, and going rather to a district than any one place. There can be little doubt that they were also letter-carriers, as it would form a light and profitable addition to their business. It is curious to observe how the profit thus arising from the conveyance of matters at once important from their contents, yet of small bulk, should have ultimately led to the establishment of a post-office; while at a more recent period, when the post-office income formed a material item in the national revenue, it was found that the carrier still retained so large a part of this business, even in defiance of law, as to form a material part of the case justifying the reduction of the postage rate to so small a sum as a penny.

As of course all the value of such a collection depends on its authenticity, we shall quote as much as may be necessary from Sir John Fenn's own account of them in his introduction to the first volume.

“It will now be necessary to satisfy the reader of the authenticity of the letters here laid before him, by presenting him with a pedigree of their descent, accompanied with such observations as have arisen in the mind of the editor, from an accurate examination of every one of them.

"These letters were most of them written by, or to particular persons of the family of Paston, in Norfolk (who lived in the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., Richard III., and Henry VII.), were carefully preserved in that family for several descents, and were finally in the possession of the Earl of Yarmouth [their lineal descendants, with whom the male line of the family terminated]; they then became the property of that great collector and antiquary Peter le Neve, Esq., Norroy; from him they devolved to Mr. Martin, by his marriage with Mrs. le Neve, and were a part of his collections purchased by Mr. Worth, from whom, in 1774, they came to the editor."

"The hand-writing in some of the letters is, though black and thick, very true and legible; in others, the decyphering of it has been attended with much trouble and difficulty."

"The thought of transcribing [or rather translating] each letter, according to the rules of modern orthography and punctuation, arose from a hint which the editor received from an antiquary, respectable for his knowledge and publications; whose opinion was, that many would be induced to read these letters, for the sake of the various matter they contain, for their style, and for their curiosity, who, not having paid attention to ancient modes of writing and abbreviations, would be deterred from attempting such a task, by their uncouth appearance in their original garb."

"In the transcribed letters, except in the spelling and pointing, as little alteration is made as was possible; the turn of expression and phraseology of the original, even where the grammar is defective, being preserved. The obsolete words are continued, but the sense is expressed by modern words or phrases, in italics between parentheses." We introduce here one of the letters in its original orthography, &c., and we select one written by a secretary and signed by a peer as a fair specimen, with the copy in the parallel column as it appears in the present edition. The autographs added to many of the letters will afford sufficient specimens of the writing of the period.

To the right worshipful and with all myn herte right entirely-belovoid brother, the Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful and w^t all myn herte right entierly beloved brother I recomaunde me to you thanking right herteli youre good brotherhode for youre gode and gentill'res the whiche it hath liked you to sende unto me nowe late and like it you to knowe I p'seeve by the tenor of the seid l're youre gode desire of c'tein dubete that I owe unto you. In gode feith brother it is so w^t me at this tyme I have but easy stuffe of money wthinne me, for so meche as the seison of the yer is not yet growen so that I may not plesse youre seid gode brotherhode as God knoweth my wille and entent were to do and I had it.

Nev'theles and it like you I sende you bi my some Stafford an obligation wherof of late tyme I have receivid part of the dubete therinne comp'sid, the residue of whiche I prai you to resceve bi the seid obligation and

RIGHT worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I recommend me to you, thanking right heartily your good brotherhood for your good and gentle letters, the which it hath liked you to send unto me now late; and like it you to know, I perceive, by the tenor of the said letter, your good desire of certain debt that I owe unto you.

In good faith, brother, it is so with me at this time that I have but easy stuff of money within me, for so much as the season of the year is not yet grown, so that I may not please your said good brotherhood, as God knoweth my will and intent were to do and (if) I had it.

Nevertheless and (if) it like you, I send you by my son Stafford an obligation, whereof of late time I have received part of the debt

that I may have an acquittance y^e of and to
 y^eve credence unto my seid sonne in such
 thing as he shall say unto you^r gode brother-
 hode on my behalve.

Right worshipfull and w^t all myn herte
 right entirely-belovyd brother I beseeche the
 blissed Trinite p's've you in hono^r and
 p'sp'ite.

Written at my Castell of Makestok the
 xvij day of Marche.

Yowre trew and feyfull broder

W. BUCKINGH^m.

therein comprised; the residue of which I
 pray you to receive by the said obligation,
 and that I may have an acquittance thereof,
 and to give credence unto my said son in
 such thing as he shall say unto your good
 brotherhood on my behalf.

Right worshipful, and with all mine heart
 right entirely-beloved brother, I beseech the
 Blessed Trinity preserve you in honour and
 prosperity.

Written at my Castle of Makestock, the
 17th day of March.

Your true and faithful brother,
H. BUCKINGHAM..



Sir John Fenn says; "the paper on which they are written is of different degrees of fineness; some sheets being rough, and, what we now call very coarse, while others are perfectly smooth and of a much finer texture; these different sorts, however, must have been all of foreign manufacture, since the art of paper-making was not introduced into England before the reign of Henry VII.¹

"The size of the whole sheets of paper varies from ten to twelve inches in length, as the writing runs, and from about sixteen to seventeen, or eighteen inches in depth.

"The various sizes of the letters themselves are from ten to twelve inches in length, to three, six, eight, ten, or twelve inches, or more in depth, according to the quantity of the matter written.

"Most of the letters have been neatly folded up in different shapes, from three to four inches in length, and from one and an half to three inches in breadth, having either a hole cut by a knife, and a piece of paper put through it; or threads drawn through by a needle, and brought under the seal, by which they were fastened.

"Many of the seals are so far perfect as to discover the impressions of arms, crests, letters, heads, or some other devices; some of them have likewise a braid of string, or straw twisted round the impression, and fixed when the wax was warm.

"The dates are sometimes, though seldom, fully expressed in the letters, except in some of those of particular writers, as Sir John Fastolf and Sir John Paston; the day of the month only, or the saint's name, to whom the day is dedicated, being generally all the date they have.

"The editor has taken some trouble to supply these defects, and to fix the exact dates of the letters from calendars, from some fact mentioned, or other *data* in the letters themselves, and by these means to place the different letters in chronological order. In this his success has in a great measure answered his own expectations, and he hopes those of his readers will not be disappointed, since they may not be aware how much time and trouble the ascertaining of the date of a single letter has sometimes cost him.

¹ Sir John Fenn gives many plates of the paper-marks, but they offer nothing peculiar or interesting, except as they assist in establishing the age of the writing.

"It is proper here to observe, that the date of the year is always supposed to commence on the 25th day of March; and that the full dates are always placed at the end of the transcribed letters; where, notwithstanding all the endeavours of the editor, some still remain uncertain as to the exact year, &c."

Sir John Fenn performed his laborious task on the whole with much ability, and his annotations, identifying and giving an account of the personages writing or mentioned in the letters, are very satisfactory and complete. We have found occasion to differ with his translation or his explanations on some occasions, but they are few considering the difficulty and labour of his undertaking. There is, however, one point upon which we think he errs, and upon which he takes every opportunity of dilating; we mean the barbarity, violence, bloodthirstiness, and corruption of the times. In the notes we have ventured to suggest another and we think a juster conclusion, and in corroboration of our view we extract the following passages from the 'Pictorial History of England.' After the first battle of St. Alban's it is said:—"No acts of vengeance were committed: it was considered that the Somerset faction had suffered sufficiently in the deaths of the lords in the affair of St. Alban's. Not a drop of blood was spilt, nor a single attainder passed." And "there were some essential points of difference in the civil wars of the two countries; the objects of the English factions were loftier and better defined than those of the French parties; they deliberated a long time before they drew the sword; and, when they drew it, they wielded it in a more manly fashion. Instead of proceeding by surprises and assassinations, sieges of castles and paltry skirmishes,—instead of dragging on an indecisive war year after year, harrowing and wasting the substance of the poor people, each party collected its forces at once, and hastened to try the issue at once in an open field of battle."¹ The general tenor of these letters confirms this view; few or none fell except in battle, or immediately afterwards as traitors taken in arms against what was called by the victorious party their sovereign, and of those generally only the more active and powerful leaders, and it is remarkable how easily the middling and respectable classes were allowed to get off. After Cade's rebellion the punishments were neither numerous nor bloody; and even under the harsh and severe reign of Edward IV. only one person of these classes immediately connected with these letters, Sir Thomas Todenham, suffered death on the scaffold, and that was for a treasonable correspondence with Queen Margaret after the captivity of Henry VI., her expulsion from the kingdom, and the recognition by parliament of Edward IV. as the rightful sovereign. Several were indeed attainted, but appear to have been shortly restored, with little damage to their rank or property. Sir John also laments over the obstructions to and corruptions of justice. As we have already had occasion to remark, these laments are chiefly poured out on the statements of unsuccessful suitors; but considering the turbulence of the times, we are more inclined to wonder at the unimpeded course of the laws. The assizes are held regularly. In Letter cxii. we see a bribe offered and refused, as also the money offered for services done, the sheriff saying he had none deserved, and adding that he would serve J. Paston, for whom the application was made, as far as he well might, and that he would endeavour to empanel a fair jury, and this in a period when many of what are now fees were considered as presents. Again, in Letter xiv., Sir John Fastolf desires Stephen Scrope to thank his father, one of the judges of the King's Bench, "for the *rightful* favour shown me in the matter of Sir Thomas Todenham." The forms of the courts

¹ Pict. Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 93.

were not so precisely fixed as at present, and there were no doubt opportunities of favouring parties by expediting their causes and in other ways, without materially violating either law or justice; and though some parties might feel aggrieved and complain, we think the irregularities seldom arose from bribery. In political matters no doubt the judges had their prejudices, and the unfixed forms were much oftener, it is probable, wrested to the disadvantage of the persons opposed to them.

Sir John also asserts the undue and dominating power of the great noblemen of the time over the elections of members of parliament. We have endeavoured to show, in our additional notes to the letters alluding to these practices, that they do not warrant the conclusion that such influences existed. The leading political noblemen and landowners no doubt used then, as now, all the influence they possessed, and their desires may have been expressed in plainer language than is used at present, and more directly from their own mouths; but we think it clear from their letters that their wishes were often successfully opposed by the freeholders, and that still oftener they were forced to make compromises with each other on the best terms they could. That the privilege was not considered with anything like indifference by the electors is proved by the passing of two acts in the reign of Henry VI.,¹ and we quote an extract from Hume to this effect, in order to give at the same time his opinion of the matter:—

“In the eighth and tenth of this king,” says Hume, “laws were enacted, limiting the electors to such as were possessed of forty shillings a-year in land, free from all burdens within the county.” * * * * “The preamble of the statute is remarkable: ‘Whereas the elections of knights have of late, in many counties of England, been made by outrages and excessive numbers of people, many of them of small substance and value, yet pretending to a right equal to the best knights and esquires; whereby manslaughters, riots, batteries, and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same counties, shall very likely rise and be, unless due remedy be provided in this behalf,’ &c. We may learn from these expressions what an important matter the election of a member of parliament was now become in England: that assembly was beginning in this period to assume great authority; the Commons had it much in their power to enforce the execution of the laws; and if they failed of success in this particular, it proceeded less from any exorbitant power in the crown than from the licentious spirit of the aristocracy, and perhaps from the rude education of the age, and their own ignorance of the advantages resulting from a regular administration of justice.”² One of the letters in this collection gives an account of an election riot, arising from a delay on the part of the sheriff in issuing the writ, but which does not appear to have exceeded that of an election mob of the present day; some ‘battery’ perhaps among one another, some broken windows, but no manslaughter nor any apparent intervention of the nobility. In this same reign also the Commons made their importance felt, by interfering against the received theory and avowed opinions of the aristocracy that the right of appointing regents and protectors lay with them only, in the nomination of the Duke of York as protector for the second time, and their assent is formally introduced into the act passed to ratify the election of the peers.³

But, after all, the chief interest of this collection will be found in its domestic and social character. We see the modes of living, of dress, of educating the sons and daughters of the

¹ Statutes at Large, 8 Hen. VI. cap. 7, and 10 Hen. VI. cap. 2.

² Hume's Hist. of England—remarks at the close of the reign of Henry VI.

³ Pict. Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 93.

middling classes; we are told of the little transactions that enliven or distract the quietude of private life, the quarrels with neighbours, the slanders of enemies, of marriages, deaths, the making and executing of wills, and incidentally of the commerce and manufactures of the country. We discover that the people were not so priest ridden as has been asserted and believed; and that priests were by no means above the law; though their superior education and abilities made them useful and therefore influential; and we have a specimen of the style of popular preaching. We are shown also the great extent of parental authority, and the lowly and submissive style used by children to and of their parents, and by the wife to the husband, which will not fail to be noticed by the reader; as also the extreme respect and formality with which all correspondents address each other. In all such points we have no record so complete and so satisfactory in any other period of our history.

We have now only a few words to add of our share in the present edition. We have carefully compared the translation with the original transcript, and corrected many inaccuracies of the worthy editor silently, where they were of minor importance; in other cases we have marked our alterations or additions by brackets [], or noticed them in the notes. We have retained most of Sir John Fenn's annotations, to which we have added such of our own as we have thought necessary either for correcting or explaining them, marking these additions also by inclosing them in brackets. We have rarely altered his chronological arrangements, as many of the letters do not admit of affixing to them a precise date, and where we have done so it is noticed, and the reasons given in a note.

The chronological order of Sir J. Fenn's edition places at the beginning two documents both much prior in point of date to any of the succeeding letters, and neither possessing the character of the rest of the collection. The first is, "Articles declaring how the Earl of Warwick took the charge of Henry VI.;" the other is, "A petition against Sir William Paston, knight, a judge in the Court of Common Pleas, by W. Dalling." As, however, they are both curious, particularly the first mentioned, we have thought it better to append them to this introduction than to print them in the body of the work.

On the back of the parchment on which these articles are transcribed is written "The requests of the Erle of Warwick," and then the following memorandum: "xxix^o die Novemb. A^o undecimo apud West^m lecti fuerūt p^{ntes} Articuli corā Dñis infra subscribentibz et ad eos^m R^{ns}onies ibid^m dabant continuē q^d infra patet, p^{ntibus} Dñis infrascriptis."

Articles declaring how the Earl of Warwick¹ took the charge of King Henry VI.

For the good rule, demeaning, and surety of the king's person, and draught of him to virtue and cunning (*knowledge*) and eschewing of any thing that might give impeachment or

let thereto, or cause any charge, default, or blame to be laid upon the Earl of Warwick at any time without his desert, he considering that peril and business of his charge about the

¹ Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was born in 1380, and, whether we consider him as a soldier or statesman, was one of the most considerable personages of his time. In 1408 he visited the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and on his journey thither acquitted himself with the greatest valour at tournaments, and other acts of valour in the courts of several princes. King Henry V. for his great merit appointed him guardian and preceptor to his infant son, which appointment upon his death was confirmed by parliament. In consequence of this

trust he was recalled from France, where he had a principal command under the Duke of Bedford, and upon that duke's decease, in 1435, he returned thither again as regent. He died at the castle of Rouen in Normandy, on the 30th of April, 1439, and his body, by his own desire being brought into England, was deposited for a time in the collegiate church of Warwick, till the sumptuous chapel, which he had directed to be built, should be ready for its reception. This chapel, together with the magnificent tomb of its founder, cost 2481*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*

king's person groweth so, that that authority and power, given to him before, sufficeth him nought without more thereto, desireth therefore these things that follow :—

1. First, that considering that the charge of the rule, demeaning, and governance, and also of nurture of the king's person, resteth upon the said earl whilst it shall like the king, and the peril, danger, and blame, if any lack or default were in any of these, the which lack or default might be caused by ungodly or unvirtuous men, if any such were about his person; he desireth therefore for the good of the king and for his own surety to have power and authority to name, ordain, and assign, and, for cause that shall be thought to him reasonable, to remove those that shall be about the king's person of what estate or condition that they be, not intending to comprehend in this desire the steward, chamberlain, treasurer, controller, nor sergeants of offices, save such as serve about the king's person and for his mouth.

Rñs. (*Reponso*.) Answer. As toward the naming, ordinance, and assignation before said, it is agreed, so that he take in none of the four knights nor esquires for the body, without the advice of my Lord of Bedford,¹ him being in England, and him being out, of my Lord of Gloucester,² and of the remanent of the king's council.

2. Item, the said earl desireth that where he shall have any person in his discretion suspect (*suspected*) of misgovernance, and not behoveful nor expedient to be about the king, except the estates of the house, that he may

put them from exercise and occupation of the king's service, till that he shall mowe [*be able to*] have speech with my Lords of Bedford or of Gloucester, and with the other lords of the king's council, to that end that the default of any such person [*being*] known unto him, shall mowe ordain thereupon as them (*they*) shall think be expedient and behoveful.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

3. Item, the said earl desireth that, for sickness and other causes necessary and reasonable, he may, by warning to my Lords of Bedford or Gloucester, and the king's council be and stand freely discharged of the said occupation and business about the king's person, under the favour and good grace of the king, my Lords of Bedford and Gloucester, and other lords of the king's council.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

4. Item, that considering how, blessed be God, the king is grown in years, in stature of his person, and also in conceit and knowledge of his high and royal authority and estate, the which naturally cause him, and from day to day as he groweth shall cause him more and more, to grudge with chastising, and to loath it, so that it may reasonably be doubted lest he will conceive against the said earl, or any other that will take upon him to chastise him for his defaults, displeasure or indignation therefore, the which without due assistance is not easy to be born. It like therefore to my Lord of Gloucester and to all the lords of the king's council to promitte (*promise*) to the said earl and assure him that they shall firmly and truly assist him in the exercise of the charge and occupation that he hath about the king's person, namely in chastising of him for his defaults, and support the said earl therein; and if the king at any time will conceive for that cause indignation against the said earl, my said Lord of Gloucester and lords shall do all their true diligence and power to remove the king therefrom.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

5. Item, the said earl desireth, that forasmuch as it shall be necessary to remove the king's person at divers times into sundry places as the cases may require, that he may have power and authority to remove the king by his discretion into what place him (*he*) thinketh necessary for the health of his body and surety of his person.

¹ John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, brother to the late king, and regent of France, was one of the most valiant and accomplished princes of his age. He knighted his nephew, King Henry VI. in 1425, and dying at Paris in 1435, was buried under a sumptuous monument in Our Lady's Church at Rouen, which, when Lewis XI. was counselled to deface, he nobly replied, "Touch it not; let the body of that great man rest in peace, which when alive would have disquieted the proudest of us all."

² Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, protector of the realm of England, and youngest brother to Henry V. was a scholar and a statesman. At a parliament holden at St. Edmund's Bury, in 1446-7, he was arrested for high treason, and shortly after was found murdered in his bed in the abbey there, by the contrivance and procurement, as it was supposed of Queen Margaret, and the then Marquis of Suffolk, in conjunction with the Cardinal of Winchester. He was buried at St. Alban's, and in 1703 his body was discovered preserved in a kind of pickle.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

6. Item, sith (*since*) the said earl hath take upon him the governance of the king's person, he desireth that all the estates, officers and servants of the king's house, of what estate and condition they be, have special commandment and charge given by my Lords of Bedford and Gloucester, and by the lords of the king's council, that in all manner [*of*] things seen and advised by the said earl's discretion, that is for the king's estate, worship, health, and profit, by his commandment and ordinance, they be attendant and obeissant in accomplishing thereof.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

7. Item, forasmuch as the said earl hath knowledge that in speech that hath been had unto the king at part (*apart*) and in private, not hearing the said earl, nor any of the knights set about his person nor assigned by the said earl, he hath been stirred by some from his learning, and spoken to of diverse matters not behoveful; the said earl doubting the harm that might fall to the king, and the inconvenience that might ensue of such speech at part, if it were suffered, desireth that in all speech to be had with the king, he or one of the four knights, or some person to be assigned by the said earl, be present and privy to it.

Answer. This article is agreed, excepting such persons, as for nighness of blood, and for their estate, ought of reason to be suffered to speak with the king.

8. Item, to the intent that it may be known to the king that it proceedeth of the assent, advice, and agreement, of my Lord of Gloucester, and all my lords of the king's council, that the king be chastised for his defaults or trespasses, and that for awe thereof he forbear the more to do amiss, and intend the more busily to virtue and to learning; the said earl desireth that my lord of Gloucester, and my said other lords of the council or great part of them, that is to say, the chancellor and treasurer, and of everych (*every*) estate in the council spiritual and temporal, some come to the king's presence, and there to make to be declared to him there agreement in that behalf.

Answer. When the king cometh next to London, all his council shall come to his presence, and there this shall be declared to him.

9. Item, the said earl, that all his days hath above all other earthly things desired, and

ever shall, to keep his truth and worship unblemished and unhurt, and may not for all that let (*prevent*) malicious and untrue men to make informations of his person, such as they may not, nor dare not stand by, nor be not true; beseecheth therefore my Lord of Gloucester, and all my said lords of the council, and if they or any of them have been informed of anything that may be or found to his charge or default, and namely in his occupation and rule about the king's person, that the said earl may have knowledge thereof, to the intent that he may answer thereto, and not dwell in heavy or sinister conceit or opinion without his desert, and without answer.

Answer. It is agreed.

¹ CROMWELL.

H. GLOUCESTER.

² J. EBOR.

³ P. ELIEN.

⁴ W. LINCOLN.

⁵ J. BATHEN CANC.

⁶ J. ROFFEN.

⁷ SUFFOLK.

⁸ H. STAFFORD.

⁹ J. HUNTINGTON.

29 November, 1432. 11 H. VI.

¹ Ralph Lord Cromwell, was Lord Treasurer in 1434.

² John Kempe was translated from London to York in 1426, and from this see to Canterbury in 1452, where he died very old in 1453.

³ Philip Morgan Bishop of Worcester was translated to Ely in 1426; he was a man of learning and wisdom, and died in 1434.

⁴ William Grey was translated to the see of Lincoln, from that of London, in 1431, and died in 1435.

⁵ John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and brother to the Earl of Stafford, was Lord Chancellor. He was promoted to the see of Canterbury in 1443, and died in 1452.

⁶ John Langdon, elected Bishop of Rochester in 1421, was both an antiquary and historian, and died at the council of Basil in 1434.

⁷ William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, was, in 1443, made Marquis, and in 1448 created Duke of Suffolk. He was prime minister to Henry VI, and the favourite of his queen. Being banished to appease the national discontent in 1450, he was taken on the sea, and beheaded without trial.

⁸ Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, and in 1444 Duke of Buckingham, was killed at the battle of Northampton in 1460, where he jointly commanded the royal army with the Duke of Somerset. He was by his mother great-grandson to Edward III.

⁹ John Holland restored as Earl of Huntington, in 1416, was afterwards created Duke of Exeter. He was Admiral of England, and Constable of the Tower of London. He died in 1447, and was buried in St. Catherine's Church, near the Tower.

As a specimen of the whole, a fac-simile of the conclusion of these articles, with all the autographs placed as they are subscribed to the original parchment, is given below.

and not dwell in Henry's sumptuous conceit or opinion without his desert
and without a sincere

pro. it is agreed
to. Henceforward

from Bell

J. Ebor N. Flory

unclear In that case, I suppose

Surrey & Stafford

1. Introduction

On the back of this petition, in a hand of the time, is written "Falsa Billa Willi Dalling tra' p'liament temp'e pr. Henr. Grey tredecimo Regis Henr. viii." By this endorsement the bill appears to have been declared a false one, and the petition rejected; it may therefore be supposed that the accusations were ill-grounded. The reason for the charge might be this, that when Sir William was an acting lawyer he received general retaining fees from corporations, religious societies, and persons of consequence, to be their standing counsel, and which possibly might be continued to him after he became a judge, as a mark of their respect and as a reward for the good services he had formerly done them; this might certainly give cause to suspect his impartiality when any causes in which these societies, &c. were concerned came before him. This petition seems to originate from some part he had taken in favour of a lady, whereby the wardship of a minor was made less valuable to the king, or, most probably, to the person who had purchased it from the crown. Such a conduct in those times must have appeared very extraordinary, when the judges were entirely under the regal control.

Sir William Paston was born in 1378, became a judge of the Common Pleas in 1430, and from the propriety of his conduct was called The Good Judge. The following memorandum recorded by his widow of his death deserves notice, as it shows the reverence paid to his corpse, by kneeling at the foot of the bed on which it lay.

"On the Thursday at nyght before our Lady's day the Assipeon betwixt xj and xij of the clokk in the yer of or Lord God mccc and xliiij, the Sondays I're on the D, died my husband, God assoyle his sowle; and on the Fryday after I sent for John Paston, John Dam, &c. and on the Wedynsday after cam John Paston, &c. And on the Fryday John Paston, John Dam, and I yede into the chambre, and they desyred of me to see the wyl; I lete them see it; and John Dam redde it, and when he had redde it, John Paston walkyd up and down in the chambe, John Dam and I knelyd at the beddy's fete."

A petition to the Commons of England against Sir William Paston, knight, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, by William Dalling.

PLEASE it to the rightsage and wise Commons of this present parliament, that where(as) every justice of the king is sworn that he should not take no fees nor rewards for to be of counsel with no man, but only with our sovereign lord the king, and thereto they be sworn.

Please it to (the) Commons of the present parliament that William Paston, one of the justices of our sovereign lord (the) king taketh divers fees and rewards of divers persons within the shires of Norfolk and Suffolk, and is withhold with every matter in the said countries; that is to say—

Of the town of Yarmouth, 1^s. yearly.
Of the Abbot of St. Benet's xxvj^s. viij^d.
Of the Prior of St. Faith's xx^s.
Of my Lady Rothenhale 1^s xx^s.

¹ This sentence in the original has a line drawn over it. She was a widow of Sir John Rothenhale, knight, and dying at Caister, by Yarmouth, in 1440, was buried in Norwich cathedral.

Of the Prior of Norwich xl^s.

Of the Prior of Pentney xx^s.

Of the town of Lynn xl^s.

Of the Prior of Walsingham xx^s.

And of Katharine Shelton² x marks (6l. 13s. 4d.) against the king for to be of her counsel for to destroy the right of the king and of his ward, that is for to say, Ralph,³ son and heir of John Shelton.

1434. 13 H. VI.

² Catharine, widow of William Shelton, Esq. and daughter of Simon Barret, was grandmother to Ralph, and died in 1456.

³ Sir Ralph Shelton, knight, son and heir of John Shelton, Esq. was born in 1430; he married, Margaret, daughter of Robert Clere, Esq. of Ormesby and was high-sheriff of Norfolk, &c. in 1487. He died before 1500, and in the east window of the north isle of Shelton church, in Norfolk, were the effigies of him and his wife, in surcoats of their arms. He built both the church and hall, but the latter has been long in ruins.

PASTON LETTERS.

HENRY VI., FROM ABOUT 1433—1460.

LETTER I.—(III. vol. iii. p. 17.)

We here see a lady of the first rank going to London in the beginning of the winter to the house of one of her dependents, for which she had agreed with him for the time of her stay in town; and by her stuff was meant most probably her beds, hangings, and other matters for the fitting up of her lodgings.

To our right trusty and heartily well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

KATHARINE, DUCHESS OF NORFOLK.
RIGHT trusty and entirely well beloved,
we greet you well, heartily as we can.
And forasmuch as we purpose with grace of
Jesu to be at London within brief time, we
pray you that your place there may be ready
for us, for we will send our stuff thither tofore
[before] our coming; and such agreement as

we took with you for the same, we shall duly
perform it with the might of Jesu, who have
you in his blessed keeping.

Written at Epworth, the 2nd day of October.¹

Epworth, in Lineolnshire,
in the Island of Axholm,
2nd of October, after 1434.

LETTER II.—(I. vol. i. p. 3.)

We are in this letter acquainted with the first introduction of a young lady to the gentleman intended for her husband, and are informed that she "made hym gentil cher in gyntyl wise:" but it appears somewhat extraordinary, that being the heiress of a family of rank and fortune, any intimation should be given to the father of the lover of presenting her with a gown, and especially that "ye gounne nedyth for to be had." [It may be observed, however, that at this period, and for a considerable time afterwards, money was relatively much scarcer than at present, and persons of large landed property were often much distressed for want of sums which appear now almost ludicrously small. A gown then, also, was a costly article. In the privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII., published by Sir N. H. Nicolas, while a workman's daily wages are set down at 6d., we find a "furze and a half of fox for a gown of russet, xiiis." and xv. yards and a half of black damask for a gown for the queen, at viis. the yard, cviis. vid."]

To my worshipful husband, William Paston,² be this letter taken.

DEAR husband, I recommend me to you, &c. Blessed be God I send you good tidings of the coming and the bringing home of the gentlewoman³ that ye weeten (*know*) of from Reedham this same night, according

to appointment that ye made there for yourself.

And as for the first acquaintance between John Paston⁴ and the said gentlewoman, she made him gentle cheer in gentle wise, and

¹ Katharine Duchess of Norfolk, widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, who died in 1433, was daughter of Ralph Lord Neville, first Earl of Westmoreland, by Jane, daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. After the duke's death she married in succession, Thomas Strangeways, Esq., John Viscount Beaumont, and Sir John Wicliffe, brother to Anthony Earl Rivers; wife or widow to one of which she most probably was at the time this letter was written, though it might be written during her widowhood as Duchess of Norfolk, as it

is dated from the late duke's seat at Epworth, or Epleworth.

² Sir W. Paston, knt., a judge of the Common Pleas, was born in 1378, died in 1444, æt. 66.

³ Margaret, daughter and heir of John Mauteby, Esq., of Mauteby in Norfolk, by Margaret, daughter of John Berney, of Reedham, Esq., and who, soon after the writing of this letter, became wife of John Paston, Esq.

⁴ Son of Sir William and Agnes Paston, was born about 1420, and died in 1466.

said he was verily your son; and so I hope there shall need no great treaty between them.

The parson of Stockton told me if ye would buy her a gown, her mother would give thereto a goodly fur; the gown needeth for to be had; and of colour it would be a goodly blue, or else a bright saugnine.

I pray you to buy for me two pipes¹ of gold. Your stews² do well. The Holy Trinity have you in governance.

Written at Paston³ in haste the Wednesday next after "Deus qui errantibus;"⁴ for default of a good secretary, &c.

Yours, AGNES PASTON.⁵

Paston, Weduesday,
before 1440, 18 II. VI.

Agnes Paston

LETTER III. (II. vol. i. p. 5.)

This letter gives us an account of the ceremonies used at the time the Duke of Orleans was released, and of the Duke of Gloucester's absolute disapprobation of this measure. He had been taken prisoner at the famous battle of Agincourt, fought on Friday the 25th of October, 1415, 3 H. V. where he was found under a heap of dead bodies almost lifeless; and had continued a prisoner till this time (1 Nov. 1440, 19 H. VI.), a space of twenty-five years. Henry V. on his death-bed had ordered that he should not be released till a peace with France was concluded; and the Duke of Gloucester, [uncle of Henry VI. and protector] not only now protested against his enlargement, but had his protest recorded. This, however, availed nothing, for the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, Henry Beaufort, and his party, prevailed. [The letter also notices two curious subjects; the arrival of the knight from Spain to fight for the honour of his mistress; and a most singular instance of legal trickery. Our ancestors seem to have had the ability of availing themselves of the forms of law to combat its spirit, to an extent which is not exceeded even by the lowest and most reckless attorney now. We may add here that, in the address of the letter, the style "right reverend" implies nothing clerical, but that the latter word was then commonly used in the present sense of revered.]

To my right reverend and right honourable master, John Paston, be this given.

SALVETE, &c. Tidings, the Duke of Orleans hath made his oath upon the sacrament, and used it, never for to bear arms against England, in the presence of the king and all the lords, except my Lord of Gloucester; and in proving [*as a proof that*] my said Lord of Gloucester agreed never to his deliverance, when the mass began he took his barge, &c.

God give grace the said Lord of Orleans be true, for this same week shall he towards France.

Also Frenchmen and Picards a great number came to Arfleet,⁶ for to have rescued it; and our lords with their small puissance manly beat them, and put them to flight, and, blessed

be our Lord, have taken the said city of Arfleet; the which is a great jewel to all England, and especially to our country.

Moreover there is one come into England, a knight out of Spain, with a kerchief⁷ of pleasaunce enwrapped about his arm; the which knight will run a course with a sharp spear for his sovereign lady's sake, whom either Sir Richard Wodville,⁸ or Sir Christopher Talbot,⁹ shall deliver, to the worship of England and of themselves by God's grace.

Farthermore ye be remembered, that an esquire of Suffolk, called John Lyston, recovered, in assize of novel disseisin, 700

¹ Gold thread on pipes or rolls, for needle-work or embroidery, &c.

² Ponds to keep fish alive for present use.

³ In Norfolk, in the hundred of Tunstead.

⁴ The words beginning the Collect on the third Sunday after Easter.

⁵ Agnes, daughter and coheir of Sir Edmond Barry, or Berry, of Harlingbury-hall in Hertfordshire, by Alice, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Garbridge, knt., and wife of Sir William Paston, knt. She died in 1479, and was buried by her husband, in Our Lady's Chapel at the east end of Norwich Cathedral.

⁶ Harfleur in Normandy.

⁷ A scarf, or rich embroidered handkerchief, presented him by his sovereign lady, and which, in honour of her, he wore tied upon his arm; such ornaments were often worn by knights at their tilting matches.

⁸ Afterwards Earl Rivers, and father to Elizabeth, the Queen of Edward IV.—He was beheaded at Baubury, in 1469.

⁹ Third son of John, the famous Earl of Shrewsbury. He was slain in the battle of Northampton, in July, 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

marks (466*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in damages against Sir Robert Wingfield, &c. In avoiding of the payment of the said 700 marks, the said Sir Robert Wingfield¹ subtly hath outlawed² the said John Lyston in Nottinghamshire, by the virtue of which outlawry all manner of chattel to the said John Lyston appertaining are accrued unto the king, &c. And anon (*as soon*) as the said outlawry was certified, my Lord Treasurer granted the said 700 marks to my Lord of Norfolk³ for the arrears of his sowle⁴ whilst he was in Scotland. And according to this assignment aforesaid, tallies (*were*) delivered, &c. And my Lord of Norfolk hath released the same 700 marks to Sir Robert Wingfield.

And here is great heaving and shoving by my Lord of Suffolk⁵ and all his counsel for

to espy how this matter came about, &c. Sir, I beseech (*you*) recommend me unto my mistress your mother, to my mistress your wife, and to my mistress your sister, et omni-bus aliis quorum interest, &c.

Sir, I pray you, with all my heart, hold me excused that I write thus homely and briefly unto you, for truly convenable (*competent*) space sufficed me not.

No more, at this time, but the Trinity have you in protection, &c., and when your leisure is, resort again unto your college, the Inner Temple, for there be many which sore desire your presence, Welles and others, &c.

Written on the Feast of All Saints, between mass and matins calamo festinante, &c.

Yours, ROBERT REPPS.⁶

All-Saints-Day,
Tuesday, 1 Nov. 1440. 19 H. VI.

LETTER IV. (IV. vol. iii. p. 19.)

I can fix no certain date to this letter, either from the extraordinary account of the destruction of so great a number of Flemings, or from J. Paston's residence at Peter-house, in Cambridge, though by this it appears to have been written early in his life, and soon after his marriage, which took place before the year 1440. The words, too, "*wt alle my sympl herte,*" seem the expression of a young and unexperienced woman. The writing and spelling likewise vary from her usual manner; and her Christian name is differently written. [No notice of this descent of the Flemings is to be found in any of our historians, though Margaret Paston could scarcely be altogether deceived in an event occurring so near her, but it is probable the importance of it had been greatly exaggerated.]

To my worshipful husband, John Paston, abiding at Peterhouse, in Cambridge.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful husband, I recommend me to you with all my simple heart, and pray you to weet that there came up eleven hundred Flemings at Waxham,⁷ thereof were taken and killed and drowchyn (*drowned*) eight hundred; and they had not have been, ye should have been at home this Whitsuntide, and I suppose that ye should be at home ereout (*ere it*) long be.

I thank you heartily for my letter, for I had none of you since I spake with you last of for the matter of John Maryot; the quest

passed not off that day, for my Lord of Norfolk was in town for Wedyrby's matter, wherefore he would not let it pass off, for further of I kowe (*know, q.*) Fynch nor Bylbys maketh no purveyance for his good.

No more I write to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Trinity Sunday.

YOUR MARKARTE PASTON.

Norwich, Trinity Sunday,
Date uncertain. After 1440. 19 H. VI.

¹ The Wingfields were an ancient family seated at Wingfield Castle, and at Letheringham in Suffolk.

² Referring to this outlawry, on the back of the original letter, in an ancient hand, is written, "a lewde practise in those dayes."

³ John Mowbray.

⁴ [*Sowde*, pay—from the Norman *solde*, whence

we have our term *soldier*, and the French and Germans their *soldat*.]

⁵ William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk: he was afterwards Duke of Suffolk, and beheaded at sea, in 1450.

⁶ The family of Repps flourished from the Conquest, for many centuries, at Repps, &c. in Norfolk.

⁷ [Waxham in Norfolk, in the hundred of Happing.]

LETTER V.—(V. vol. iii. p. 21.)

This is a most affectionate letter, and cannot be read without emotion; it gives us an high opinion of the writer's tenderness towards her husband; her wish to have him at home, and under her tender care, "lever dan a new gounne zow it were of scarlette" shows the artlessness of her regard, and impresses us with an idea of the purest simplicity. The letter was written after the birth of her son, and before the death of Sir William Paston, I have therefore fixed it to 1443.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Temple at London, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking God of your amending of the great disease that ye have had, and I thank you for the letter that ye sent me, for by my troth my mother and I were nought in heart's ease from the time that we wist (*knew*) of your sickness, till we wist verily of your amending.

My mother behested (*vowed*) another image¹ of wax of the weight of you, to our Lady of Walsingham, and she sent four nobles (1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to the four orders of friars at Norwich to pray for you, and I have behested to go on pilgrimage to Walsingham and to St. Leonard's² for you; by my troth I had never so heavy a season as I had from the time that I wist of your sickness, till I wist of your amending, and yet my heart is in no great ease, nor nought shall be, till I weet that ye be very whole. Your father³ and mine was this day se'night at Beccles, for a matter of the Prior of Bromholm, and he lay at Gelderstone that night, and was there till it was nine of the clock and the other day. And I sent thither for a gown, and my mother said that I should none have than till I had been there anon, and so they could none get.

My father Garneys⁴ sent me word that he should have been here the next week and my Emme also, and play them here with their hawks, and they should have me home with

them; and so God help me, I shall excuse me of my going thither if I may, for I suppose that I shall readilier have tidings from you here than I should have there. I shall send my mother a token that she took (*brought to*) me, for I suppose that the time is come that I should send it her, if I keep the behest that I have made; I suppose I have told you what it was; I pray you heartily that (*ye*) will vouchsafe to send me a letter as hastily as ye may, if writing be none disease (*pain*) to you, and that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how your sore do. If I might have had my will, I should have seen you ere this time; I would ye were at home, if it were your ease, and your sore might be as well looked to here as it is there [*where*] ye be now, lever (*rather*) than a new gown though it were of scarlet. I pray you if your sore be whole, and so that ye may endure to ride when my father come to London, that he will ask leave and come home when the horse should be sent home again, for I hope ye shall be kept as tenderly here as ye be at London. I may none leisure have to do write half a quarter so much as I should say to you if I might speak with you. I shall send you another letter as hastily as I may. I thank you that ye would vouchsafe to remember my girdle, and that ye would write to me at the time, for I suppose that writing was none ease to you. Almighty

¹ This offering of an image of wax, of the weight of the person for whose good it was promised, is a curious circumstance. [See head of Letter xvi. for a notice of our Lady of Walsingham.]

² The Church of the priory of St. Leonard at Norwich, was famous at this time for the resort of pilgrims to the images of the Holy Virgin, the Holy Cross, and St. Anthony: but became afterwards much more famous by the visitation of pilgrims far and

near, to the image of good King Henry VI., by whose miraculous effects great cures were supposed to have been performed.

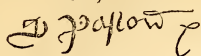
³ Sir William Paston, the judge.

⁴ This was probably her godfather, and Emme was very likely his daughter or niece, and Margaret Paston's friend [more probably *emc*—uncle, as used by Spenser.] The family of Garneys were at this time lords of Gelderstone.

God have you in his keeping, and send you health. Written at Oxnead, in right great haste, on St. Michael's even.

Yours, M. PASTON.

Oxnead,
Saturday,
28th September,
1443. 22 H. VI.



My mother greet you well, and sendeth you God's blessing and hers; and she prayeth you, and I pray you also, that ye be well dieted of meat and drink, for that is the greatest help that ye may have now to your healthward. Your son¹ fareth well, blessed be God!

LETTER VI.—(VI. vol. iii. p. 27.)

From this letter we learn the time and place of holding the assizes in Sussex, one of the counties which now makes a part of the home circuit; and we likewise understand that the chief justice intended going by water to those places in Essex, Kent, and Surry, which lay along the river, no conveyance in any carriage being then thought of by him, though his illness was such as prevented his riding on horseback. John Hody was chief justice of the King's Bench from 1440 to 1462.

To my right worthy and worshipful Lord William Paston, justice, in haste.

PLEASE it your good Lordship to weet, that the Chief Justice of the King's Bench recommendeth him to you, and is right sorry of the matter that is (*the*) cause of your none coming hither, but he will do all that he can or may for you. He hath had a sciatica that hath letted [*hindered*] him a great while to ride, and (*he*) dare not yet come on none horse's back, and therefore he hath spoken to the lords of the council, and informed them of your sickness and his also, that he may not ride at these next assizes to East Grinstead; and though those assizes discontinue pur noun venu dez Justicez,² he hopeth to be excused and ye also. And as for the remanent of the assizes he

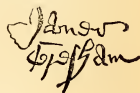
shall purvey to be there by water; and Almighty Jesu make you heyle (*healthy*) and strong.

Written right simply, the Wednesday next to fore the Feast of the Purification of our Lady, at London.

By your most simple servant,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Wednesday,
30th of January, 1443.
22 H. VI.



LETTER VII.—(VII. vol. iii. p. 29.)

[This letter is from John Gyney, probably father of Sir W. Jenney, a judge of the King's Bench in 1477, and contains an account of a dispute among some lawyers as to passing and signing some title deeds. It is written at North Walsham in Norfolk, in February, before 1443, and addressed to Sir W. Paston at West-

minster. The letter concludes with the following paragraph:—"My said lady, your wife, prayeth you to be remembered of her green ginger of almonds for Lent, and of the leech (*physician*) of Orwell, for her sickness increaseth daily upon her, whereof she is sore afraid."]

LETTER VIII.—(III. vol. i. p. 11.)

[This is also a letter upon legal affairs, being from John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, to John Paston, appointing him, with W. Yelver-

ton and W. Jenney, both subsequently judges of the King's Bench, to be arbitrators betwixt him and the heirs of Edmund Swathing.]

¹ This was probably Sir John Paston, born 1442.

² [Through the non-arrival of the justices.]

LETTER IX.—(IV. vol. i. p. 13.)

This Letter presents us with the effects of a private dispute, and gives us an instance of the dangerous though common ferocity of these unsettled times; it must have been written between 1440 and 1450, as in the former year Lord Beaumont was created a Viscount, and in the latter Sir Humphrey Stafford was killed. [It seems rather to be a street scuffle, "they fell in haudes togyder," weapons were drawn, as in a contest they are almost certain to be when commonly worn; one was struck a "grette stroke on the hed," and the other endeavoured to stab. Of course the retainers, alike armed, could seldom refrain from joining in the quarrel, and of course also in their master's favour as here. When at a recent period private soldiers were suffered to wear their bayonets, we know similar events to that here narrated were too frequently the consequence.]

To my worshipful and reverend Lord John Viscount Beaumont.¹

RIGHT worshipful, and my reverend and most special Lord, I recommend me unto your good grace in the most humble and lowly wise that I can or may, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, as to my most singular joy and special comfort.

And if it please your Highness, as touching the sudden adventure that fell lately at Coventry, please it your Lordship to hear, that on Corpus Christi² even last passed, between eight and nine of the clock at afternoon, Sir Humphrey Stafford³ had brought my master, Sir James of Ormond,⁴ toward his inn from my Lady of Shrewsbury⁵ and returned from him towards his inn, he met with Sir Robert Harcourt⁶ coming from his mother's towards his inn, and passed Sir Humphrey; and Richard his son came somewhat behind, and when they met together they fell in hands together, and Sir Robert smote him a great stroke on the head with his sword, and Richard with his dagger hastily went toward him, and as he stumbled, one of Harcourt's men smote him in the back with a knife; men wot (*know*) not who it was readily; his father heard (*a*) noise and rode toward them, and his men ran before him thitherward; and in the going down off his horse, one, he wot not who, behind him, smote him on the head with an edged tool; men know not with us, with what weapon, that he fell down, and his son fell down before

him as good as dead; and all this was done, as men say, in a Pater-noster while.⁷

And forthwith Sir Humphrey Stafford's men followed after, and slew two men of Harcourt's, one Swynerton and Bradshawe, and more be hurt, some be gone, and some be in prison in the jail at Coventry.

And before the coroner of Coventry, upon the sight of the bodies, there be indicted as principals for the death of Richard Stafford, Sir Robert Harcourt and the two men that be dead; and for the two men of Harcourt's that be dead, there be indicted two men of Sir Humphrey's as principals; and as yet there hath been nothing found before the justice of the peace of Coventry of this riot, because the sheriff of Warwickshire is dead, and they may not sit unto the time there be a new sheriff; and all this mischief fell because of an old debate that was between them for taking of a distress, as it is told.

And Almighty Jesu preserve your high estate, my special Lord, and send you long life and good health.

Written at Coventry on Tuesday next after Corpus Christi day, &c.

By your own poor servant,
JOHN NORTHWOOD.

Coventry,
Tuesday after Corpus Christi day,
between 1440 and 1450, 18 and 28 H. VI.

who afterwards, in 1449, was created Earl of Wiltshire.

⁵ Wife of John Talbot, the famous Earl of Shrewsbury.

⁶ He signalled himself in the wars of Henry VI. and Edward IV., was a knight of the Garter; and, in November, 1470, 10 E. IV., was slain by the Staffords, perhaps in revenge for this murder of Richard Stafford.

⁷ Proverbially, a short time; for our forefathers, who were to repeat a great number of Pater-nosters at once, performed the business very expeditiously.

¹ John Viscount Beaumont, so created in February, 1439-40, 18 H. VI., was the first of that title by patent in England; he was killed at the battle of Northampton, in July 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

² The Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

³ He was a collateral branch of the family of the Duke of Buckingham; and, in June 1450, commanded a detachment of the royal army sent out against the rebel Jack Cade: his party fell into an ambush, and he was killed.

⁴ Query, whether James, son of the Earl of Ormond,

LETTER X.—(VIII. vol. iii. p. 33.)

[Rights of way, trespasses, and claims of unknown rights, seem to have formed as large a share of the vexations of a landed proprietor at that time as at present. These, with threats of going to law, and providing for repairs, form the subjects of the present letter.]

To Edmund Paston, of Clifford's Inn, in London, be this letter taken.

To mine well-beloved son, I greet you well, and advise you to think once of the day of your father's counsel to learn the law, for he said many times that whosoever should dwell at Paston, should have need to cou (*to know how to*) defend himself.

The vicar of Paston¹ and your father,² in Lent last was, were thorough and accorded, and doles [*boundaries*] set how broad the way should be, and now he hath pulled up the doles, and saith he will make a ditch from the corner of his wall, right over the way to the new ditch of the great close. And there is a man in Trunch hight (*called*) Palmer too, that had of your father certain lands in Trunch over seven years or eight years ago, for corn, and truly hath paid all the years; and now he hath suffered the corn to be withset (*taken*) for eight shillings of rent to Gimmingham, which your father paid never. Geoffrey asked Palmer why the rent was not asked in mine husband's time, and Palmer said, for (*because*) he was a great man, and a wise man of the law, and that was the cause men would not ask him the rent.

I send you the names of the men, that cast down the pits, that was (*in*) Genney's Close, written in a bill closed in this letter.

I send you not this letter to make you weary of Paston, for I live in hope, and ye will learn that they shall be made weary of their work, for in good faith I dare well say it was your father's last will to have done right well to that place, and that can I show of good proof, though men would say nay. God make you right a good man, and send God's blessing and mine. Written in haste at Norwich, the Thursday after Candlemas-day.

Weet of your brother John how many joists will serve the parlour and the chapel at Paston, and what length they must be, and what breadth and thickness they must be, for your father's will was, as I ween verily, that they should be nine inches one way, and seven another way, and purvey therefore that they may be squared there, and sent hither, for here can none such be had in this country; and say to your brother John it were well done to think on Stansted Church;³ and I pray you to send me tidings from beyond sea,⁴ for here they are afraid to tell such as be reported

By your mother, AGNES PASTON.

Norwich,
Thursday, 4th of February,
1444-5, 23 H. VI.

LETTER XI.—(IX. vol. iii. p. 37.)

The manor of Oxnead had been in the Hanteyn family for many generations, and was sold by some of that family upon a bad title: it was afterwards purchased by Sir William Paston, on whose death, in 1444, John Hanteyn, clerk (having been licensed by the pope to leave his religious order and become secular.) set up his claim and recovered his inheritance; but, about 1449, he with others released his right to Agnes Paston.

To the most reverend Father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Chancellor of England.⁵

BESEECHETH meekly your gracious Lordship, your own servant and orator John Hanteyn,

chaplain, that where(*as*)⁶ he hath divers suit, and actions-in-law to be sued against Agnes

¹ John Partrick, of Swathfield, was vicar of Paston from 1442 to 1447.

² Sir William Paston, knight, died 13th of August, 1444, aged 66.

³ Stansted Church in Suffolk:—Dame Agnes had possessions in that parish.

⁴ These tidings relate to our foreign transactions, the giving up of Maine, truces, &c. &c., on the

king's marriage, which had taken place in November.

⁵ John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, and a cardinal, was Lord Chancellor from 1443 to 1447.

⁶ [The words *where* and *whereas* were used at this period indiscriminately the one for the other. This usage continued so late as the time of Shakspeare, in whose plays we find numerous instances.]

that was the wife of William Paston, of the manor of Oxnead, in the county of Norfolk; and forasmuch as your said beseecher can get no counsel of men of court to be with him in the said matters, because that the said W. Paston was one of the king's justices, and John Paston son and heir to the said W. Paston is also a man of court,¹ that it please your good Lordship to assign, and most strictly to com-

mand John Heydon,² Thomas Lyttylton³ and John Olston to be of counsel with your said beseecher in the said matters, and other that he hath to do against the said Agnes and other, and your said beseecher shall content them well for their labour, and that this be done in the reverence of God, and way of charity.

JOHN HAUTEYN, *Chaplain*.

About 1445.

LETTER XII.—(X. vol. iii. p. 39.)

[Is from Sir Roger Chamberleyn, of Gedding, Suffolk, dated the 15th of September after 1444, to Agnes Paston, informing her upon

what conditions Sir William Paston had sold the "Manor called Walsham, in Walsham."]

LETTER XIII.—(XI. vol. iii. p. 41.)

This letter I should suppose was written not long after Sir William Paston's death in 1444, as it refers to the blessing which she asked of him to bestow upon his children, probably immediately after some sickness or misfortune which had befallen her son. The style of it is that of a most affectionate mother, and the introduction of his father's saying is a masterly stroke. Her own reflections are judicious, apposite, and well timed, and the whole of the discourse would do honour to a parent at this day, when our thoughts, manners, and language are so much more refined than they were during the age in which this was written.

To my well-beloved son, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

SON, I greet you well, and let you weet, that forasmuch as your brother Clement letteth me weet that ye desire faithfully my blessing; that blessing that I prayed your father to give you the last day that ever he spake, and the blessing of all saints under heaven, and mine mote [*might*⁴] come to you all days and times; and think verily none other but that ye have it, and shall have it, with that (*on condition*) that I find you kind and willing to the weal of your father's soul, and to the welfare of your brethren.

By my counsel, dispose yourself as much as ye may to have less to do in the world: your father said, "In little business lyeth

much rest." This world is but a thoroughfare, and full of woe; and when we depart therefrom, right nought bear with us but our good deeds and ill; and there knoweth no man how soon God will clepe (*call*) him; and therefore it is good for every creature to be ready. Whom God visiteth, him he loveth.

And as for your brethren they will I know certainly labour all that in them lyeth for you. Our Lord have you in his blessed keeping, body and soul. Written at Norwich, the 29th day of October. By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, 29th of October,
about or after 1444.

LETTER XIV.—(XII. vol. iii. p. 43.)

This letter is written in an easy yet respectful style, and the thanks of the writer are hinted in the most delicate manner, for the "rightful favours" conferred upon him. Sir William Yelverton was appointed a judge of the King's Bench, in 1444, 23 H. VI. and was continued in that high office by Edward IV.

To Stephen Scroope.⁵

WORSHIPFUL and my right well beloved son, I commend me to you, and heartily thank

you for your good advertisements, and right well advised letters to me sent from time to

¹ This backwardness of the lawyers to be concerned against the widow of the late judge shows a particular degree of respect to his memory, and to the character of his son, then a lawyer.

² A lawyer, and recorder of Norwich.

³ Afterwards the famous Judge Lyttelton.

⁴ Fenn translates—*must*.

⁵ At the bottom, in a hand more modern than that of the letter, is written, "This Stephen Scroope was sonne to Dame Millicent, late wife to Sir J. Fastolf,

time, and so pray you of your good continuance.

Please it you to weete, that forasmuch as the parson Sir Thomas Howys cometh up at this time by the grievous pursuit of John Andrews and Heydon to appear before the right worshipful Sir, my right well-beloved brother, your father, and other the king's judges of the King's Bench; I pray you heartily that ye will have in remembrance for to recommend me to him, when ye speak with him, and for to thank him for his rightful favour showed in Sir Thomas's matter, and in all other matters that toucheth me, which be attained in that high

court; and so it like you pray him of his good continuance, and I shall do serve it unto him (*recompense him*) to my simple power for his good will to me showed, and to mine, and I trust to God that he shall hold him pleased; and that it like you to give credence to the said Sir Thomas of that he shall say to you for my worship and profit, and that this letter may recommend me to my daughter your wife; beseeching the Blessed Trinity to send you the accomplishment of your good desire.

Written at Caister, the 30th day of October.

JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister, 30th of October,
between 1444 and 1454. 23 and 33 H. VI.

LETTER XV.—(V. vol. i. p. 17.)

This letter has no date of the year, but it must have been written after 1444, 23 H. VI., in which year the Earl of Stafford was created Duke of Buckingham, and most probably before the breaking out of the civil war, as the duke makes no complaint of the distresses of the times, but only mentions that season of the year as not so convenient for him to procure money. The sentiments contained in the letter are those of a just man, and a man of honour, wishing to discharge his debt at the time appointed, and which, as he could not do in money, he performs by sending an obligation which he had from another, upon which Lord Beaumont might receive his demand. The direction and address of those letters, which are written from one Knight of the Garter to another, show us that in this age they esteemed one another as friends and brethren united by that most noble order, whose institution directs that the knights-companions should be "fellows and brethren united in all chances of fortune, co-partners both in peace and war, assistant to one another in all serious and dangerous transactions, and through the whole course of their lives faithful and friendly one towards another." The letter itself is written by the duke's secretary, but the conclusion and signature are by his own hand, and it is most probably the only original letter extant of this great peer.

*To the right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, the
Viscount Beaumont.¹*

RIGHT worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I recommend me to you, thanking right heartily your good brotherhood for your good and gentle letters, the which it hath liked you to send unto me now late; and like it you to know, I perceive, by the tenor of the said letter, your good desire of certain debt that I owe unto you.

In good faith, brother, it is so with me at this time that I have but easy stuff of money within me, for so much as the season of the

year is not yet grown, so that I may not please your said good brotherhood, as God knoweth my will and intent were to do and (*if*) I had it.

Nevertheless and (*if*) it like you, I send you by my son Stafford an obligation, whereof of late time I have received part of the debt therein comprised; the residue of which I pray you to receive by the said obligation, and that I may have an acquittance thereof, and to give credence unto my said son in such thing as he shall say unto your good brotherhood on my behalf.

and, as seemeth by this lre, married the daughter of Justice Yelverton, whereby the said Sir John called hym brother." It appears from a letter of William Paston, to his brother John Paston, dated 6th of September 1454, that Scroope was then either a bachelor or widower, a marriage being in contempla-

tion at that time between him and his sister Elizabeth. From the expressions there used, I am apt to believe he was then a widower. If so, this letter was written before that year.

¹ [See a notice of Viscount Beaumont in a note on letter ix. page 6.]

Right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I beseech the Blessed Trinity preserve you in honour and prosperity.

Makestock Castle, in Warwickshire,
17th March,
between 1444 and 1455; 23 and 3 H. VI.

Written at my Castle of Makestock, the 17th day of March.

Your true and faithful brother,
H. BUCKINGHAM.¹



LETTER XVI.—(VI. vol. i. p. 21.)

The image of Our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk, was in these days, and had been for ages, particularly resorted to by all ranks of people, from the king to the peasant, by foreigners as well as natives; and was held in the highest veneration for the various miracles, &c., ascribed to her. We must not therefore wonder in this enlightened age that a judge, bigotted to his religion and the credulity of the times, should ascribe not only every fortunate event which befel him to the influence of Our Lady of Walsingham, but likewise attribute his escape from every danger which had threatened him to her protection. This famous and wonder-working image was, however, in 1538, 30 H. VIII., brought to Chelsea, and there burnt.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I recommend me to you, thanking you as heartily as I can for myself, &c., and especially for that ye do so much for Our Lady's House of Walsingham, which I trust verily ye do the rather for the great love that ye deem I have thereto; for truly if I be drawn to any worship or welfare, and discharge of mine enemies' danger, I ascribe it unto Our Lady.

Praying you therefore that ye will be as friendly to Our Lady's House as I wote (*know*) well ye have alway been, and in especial now, that I might have of you the report certainly by your letter of that that Naunton your cousin informed you and told you by mouth of all matters touching Our Lady's House of Walsingham; for methinketh by that I have heard by Our Lady's priest of Walsingham, if I understood well that matter,

that it should be much to the good speed of the matter, and doubt you not Our Lady shall quite (*requite*) it you, and her poor prior hereafter as he may, &c.

Praying you also, cousin, and advising for the ease of us both, and of our friends, and of many other, that ye be at London by times this term, and if we speed well now, all well all this year after; for I know verily there was never made a greater labour than shall be made now, and therefore I pray to Our Lady, help us, and her Blessed Son, which have you in his holy keeping.

Written at your poor place of Bayfield, on St. Francis's day, in haste.

Your cousin,

WILLIAM YELVERTON, *Justice*.²

Bayfield, in Norfolk,
St. Francis's Day, 4th October,
between 1444 and 1460.

¹ Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, &c., was created Duke of Buckingham in 1444, 23 H. VI. His mother was the Lady Anne, only daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, youngest son to Edward III. He was firm in the interest of his sovereign, and lost his life in the battle of Northampton, in July 1460, where he jointly commanded with the Duke of Somerset. His son Stafford, mentioned in this letter, was most probably Humphrey Earl of Stafford, who was wounded at the first battle of St. Albans, in 1455, and of which wounds he soon after died; if so, it undoubtedly ascertains the date of this letter to

some period between 1444 and 1455. The signature is remarkable for having the initial B of the title included within the initial H of the Christian name.

² In 1440 William Yelverton, son of John Yelverton, by Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Read, and widow of Robert Clere, was appointed King's Sergeant, and in 1444 a Justice of the King's Bench, and in 1460 he was created a Knight of the Bath. This letter, therefore, was most probably written before 1460, as had it been written after that time, he would have signed himself knight as well as justice.

LETTER XVII.—(XIII. vol. iii. p. 45.)

I have given this letter as a specimen of disputes which frequently arise at present, as well as in former times, when either encroachments are really made by the principal person in a parish, or when any act is done which appears such to some self-important little owner. Which party was right in this matter is at this distance of time very immaterial; it only shows human nature to have been the same yesterday and to-day. [It is interesting also, as showing the practical freedom of the people, where the yeomen could so openly and sturdily contend against their superiors in rank and wealth, and also the general rectitude and fairness of the law-courts; for if there had been any fear of indirect influence, they would not have so readily appealed to them. England appears even at this time to have been the country—

“Where even the meanest peasant studies law,
And keeps thereby the magistrates in awe,”

as has been well said by Defoe in his ‘Trueborn Englishman,’ which couplet, by the way, is the original of Goldsmith’s more elegant but feeblere one in the ‘Traveller,’

“Where even the peasant boasts his rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.”]

To John Paston, duelling in the Temple at London, be this letter delivered in haste.

I GREET you well; and let you weet, that, on the Sunday before St. Edmond, after even song, Agnes Ball come to me to my closet and bade me good even, and Clement Spicer with her; and I asked him what he would; and he asked me why I had stopped in the king’s way; and I said to him I stopped no way but mine own, and asked him why he had sold my land to John Ball, and he swore he was never accorded with your father; and I told him if his father had done as he did, he would have been ashamed to have said as he said; and all that time Waryn Herman leaned over the park close and listened what we said; and said that the change was a rewly (*grievous*) change, for the town was undo (*undone*) thereby, and is the worse by an 100*l*. And I told him it was no courtesy to meddle him in a matter but if (*unless*) he were called to council; and proudly going forth with me in the church, he said the stopping of the way should cost me twenty nobles (6*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*.) and yet it should down again. And I let him weet, he that put it down should pay therefore.

Also he said that it was well done that I set men to work to owl¹ many while I was

here, but in the end I shall lose my cost. Then he asked me why I had away his hay at Walsingham, saying to me he would he had wist it, when it was carried, and he should a letted (*have hindered*) it; and I told him it was mine own ground, and for mine own I would hold it; and he bade me take four acres and go no farther; and thus churtly² (*churlishly* q. ?) he departed from me in the churchyard; and since I spake with a certain man, and asked him if he heard ought say why the dinner was made at Norfolk’s house, and he told me (*he*) heard say that certain men had sent to London to get a commission out of the Chancery to put down again the wall and the dyke. I received your letter by Robert Repps this day, after this letter (*was*) written thus far: I have read it, but I can give you none answer more than I have written, save the wife of Harman hath the name of our Lady,³ whose blessing ye have and mine. Written at Paston, on the day after St. Edmond.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Paston, 17th November,
after 1444. 23 H. VI.

¹ To owl may signify to deceive, as an owl is a person who carries contraband goods in the night; though I rather think it means in this place to oil, that is, to smooth to her purpose, but q. ? [Penn, there is little doubt, is right in supposing that “to owl” is here intended to signify “to deceive,” but we know of no other instance of such use of the word: in the

instance given the term *owler* is applied to the contrabandist in reference to his night employment, and not to his deceit. It cannot either, we think, mean “to oil.”]

² [Churtley is *curtly*, a good old English word, meaning shortly, sharply, angrily.]

³ [i.e. her name was Mary.]

LETTER XVIII.—(XIV. vol. iii. p. 49.)

This letter contains a curious fact. It appears by it that the sheriff's officers had arrested a person in the church during mass, and that the priest and some of the congregation had rescued him, for which a suit was commenced against them. This shows the power of the sheriff at this time, when even a church, during the time of divine service, could not protect a person against whom his process had been issued. A murderer or robber might have claimed sanctuary, but a poor debtor seems to have had no such privilege. [We do not see how the fact is ascertained by Feun that the arrest was for debt only. At that time the sheriff and his officers could arrest in criminal as well as in civil processes.]

To my right reverend mistress, Agnes Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful mistress, I recommend me unto you, thanking you of the great cheer that ye made me the last time that I was with you; mistress, in all your goods and occupations that lyeth in my simple power to do in word, will, and deed, I have do (*done*) my diligence and my power thereto, so I be saved before God; and have owen to your person right hearty love, for the which I am right ill acquit (*requited*) and (*if*) it be as I understand it, for it is do (*done*) me to weet that I am sued, with more of my parishioners, for a rescue making upon the officers of the sheriff; and I take God to record that it is wrongfully do (*done*) unto us. And the great fray that they made in the time of mass it ravished my wits and made me full heavily disposed; I pray Jesu give them grace to repent them thereof, that they that caused it may stand out of peril of soul.

Mistress, at the reverence of God, and as ever I may do service that may be pleasing unto you, send me justly word, by the bringer of this bill, how ye will that I be guided; for it is told me that, if I be taken, I may no other remedy havyn (*have*) but straight to prison; for the which I have sold away 20s. worth of stuff, and the residue of my stuff I have put it in sure hand, for truly I will not abide the jeopardy of the swth (*suit*) I have levir (*had rather*) to go as far as my feet may bear me; nevertheless as ye command me to do, so it be not to my great hurt, I will fulfil it. No more to you at this time, but God send you that grace that ye may come to his bliss. Written at Bromholm, in great haste.

By your

SIR ROBERT WILLIAMSON.

No certain date.

After 1444. 23 H. VI.

LETTER XIX.—(XV. vol. iii. p. 51.)

The date of this letter cannot be ascertained, though it must have been written after 1444, when William Yelverton was appointed a judge of the King's Bench. He seems to fear a party, in opposition to him, in Norfolk, would injure him with the king and lords, and therefore wishes for Sir John Fastolf's interference to prevent it. The judge's mother was widow to Robert Clere, and by that means he was half-brother to Edmund Clere, of Stokesby. [This Sir John Fastolf, it has been asserted, was the original of Shakspere's inimitable Sir John Falstaff. This letter, however, shows a curious contrariety to the dramatic situation of the parties, for here we have the judge suing to the knight and thanking him for his "gentleness and kindness." See a further notice of Fastolf in a subsequent letter.]

A letter to Sir John Fastolf, from Justice Yelverton.¹

My most worshipful and best betruisted master, I recommend me to you, thanking you for many great gentleness and kindness that ye have showed unto me; and for the great ease that I had of your man and your horses also.

As for tidings out of this country, here is a marvellous disposed country, and many evil-willed people to Sir Thomas Todenham and

Heydon, and but if they be put in comfort² there by the mean of a good sheriff and under-sheriff, they may have remedy now by the order of law, and else great inconveniences are like for to follow thereof; therefore, Sir, for the weal of all our good country, move the king, my Lord Chancellor, and all other lords, as ye think best for this matter on this behalf. Also,

¹ This is written on the back of the letter, which has no direction, in an ancient hand.

² [Feun gives, in error—*consort*.]

Sir, if they noise me by the mean of my Lord Scales, or by any other mean, or by any bill sued by Brygg, or by any other man by their craft, that it please you to say for me in salvation of my poor worship, which I wot well they may not hurt but (*unless*) they do me wrongs to the king, my Lord Chancellor, my Lord of Winchester, my Lord Cromwell, and in other places as ye seemeth, that no credence be given to mine hurt in mine absence. Also, Sir, that William Jenney and Brayn, (*q. Bryan?*)

the clerks of the sessions, be hasted hitherward as well as they may; and, Sir, my cousin Paston and my brother Clere can tell you much more thing that I should write of to you and (*if*) I had leisure, but I shall within short time send you more tidings out of this country, by the grace of God, which have you in his holy keeping.

By your old servant,

WILLIAM YELVERTON, *Justice.*

LETTER XX.—(XVI. vol. iii. p. 55.)

[This letter, without containing any circumstance of great importance, is so complete a detail of the events of common life, told in language of such simple truthfulness, so indicative of the secret though perhaps unconscious workings of the mind, as to be extremely interesting. The lawyer it appears had searched, not into the justice of Lady Morley's claim, but to have found writings thereof; but "could none find in none wise;" and Margaret herself had induced a witness or mediator to promise that "he will hold rather with you than with her:"]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare; praying you to weet that I was with my Lady Morley¹ on the Saturday next after that ye departed from hence, and told her what answer that ye had of John Butt, and she took it right strangely, and said that she had told you and showed you enough, whereby ye might have knowledge that the relief ought to be paid to her; and she said she wist well that ye delay it forth that she should not have that longeth (*belongeth*) to her right; and she told me how it was paid in Thomas Chambers' time, when her daughter Hastings was wedded; and she said since that ye will make none end with her, she will sue therefore as law will.

I conceived by her that she had counsel to labour against you therein within right short time, and then I prayed her that she would vouchsafe not to labour against you in this matter till ye came home, and she said nay by her faith, she would no more days give you therein; she said she had set you so many days to accord with her, and ye had broke them, that she was right weary thereof; and she said she was but a woman,

she must do by her counsel, and (*as*) her counsel had advised her, so she said she will do; then I prayed her again that she would tarry till ye came home, and I said I trusted verily that ye would do when ye came home as it longeth to you to do, and if ye might have very knowledge that she ought of right for to have it, I said I wist well that ye would pay it with right good will; and told her that ye had searched to have found writing thereof, and ye could none find in none wise; and she said she wist well there was writing thereof enough, and she hath writing thereof, how Sir Robert of Mauteby, and Sir John, and my grandsire, and divers other of my ancestors paid it, and said never nay thereto; and in no wise I could not get no grant of her to cease till ye came home; and she bade me that I should do an errand to my mother, and when I came home I did mine errand to her, and she asked me if I had spoken to my lady of this foresaid matter, and I told her how I had done, and what answer I had; and she said she should go to my Lady Morley's on the next day, and she should speak to her thereof, and essay to get grant of her to cease of the foresaid

¹ Lady Morley was the daughter of a Lord Spencer or Despencer, and had to her first husband Sir Hugh Hastings, of Elsing, in Norfolk; after his decease, she married Thomas Lord Morley, and was now his widow, and must have been consider-

ably advanced in age. She seems to have had right on her side, as the Mauteby estate in Sparham had been granted away by the family of Hastings, and most probably under a reserved rent or relief.

matter till that ye come home; and truly my mother did her devour [*duty*—the French *devoir*] right faithfully therein, as my cousin Clere shall tell you when that he speak with you; and she got grant of my said lady that there should nought be done against you therein, and (*if*) ye would accord with her, and do as ye ought to do, betwixt this time and Trinity Sunday.

Laurence Reed of Mauteby recommendeth him to you, and prayeth you that ye will vouchsafe to let him buy of you the farm barley that ye should have of him, and if ye will let him have it to a reasonable price, he will have it with right good will, and he prayeth you if ye will that he have it, that ye will vouchsafe to send him word at what price he should have the comb as hastily as ye may, and else he must be purveyed in other place.

As touching other tidings, I suppose John of Damme shall send you word in a letter, as it is told me verily Heydon shall not come at London this term.

It is said in this country that Daniel¹ is out of the king's good grace, and he shall down and all his men, and all that be his well willers; there shall no man be so hardy to do neither say against my Lord of Suffolk,² nor none that longeth to him, and all that have done and said against him they shall sore repent them. Katharine Walsham shall be wedded on the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as it is told me, to the gallant with the great chain;³ and there is purveyed for her much good array of gowns, girdles, and attires, and much other good array, and he hath purchased a great purchase of five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by the year to give her to her jointure.

I am afraid that John of Sparham⁴ is so schtyl (*light*) witted, that he will set his goods to mortgage to Heydon, or to some

other of your good friends, but if (*unless*) I can hold him in the better, ere ye come home; he hath been arrested since that ye went; and hath had much sorrow at the suit of Master John Stokes of London for ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that Sparham owed to him; and in good faith he hath had so much sorrow and heaviness that he wist not what he might do. I feel him so disposed that he would have sold and have set to mortgage all that he hath, he had not rowth (*care*) to whom, so that he might have had money to have holpen himself with; and I entreated him so that I suppose he will neither sell nor set to mortgage, neither cattle nor other goods of his, till he speak with you; he supposeth that all that is done to him is at the request of the parson of Sparham and Knatysale. I suppose it is alms (*charity*) to comfort him, for in good faith he is right heavy, and his wife also; he is not now under arrest, he hath paid his fees, and goeth at large; he was arrested at Sparham, of one of Knatysale's men.

Hodge Feke told me that Sym Shepherd is still with Wyly, and if ye will I shall purvey that he shall be brought home ere ye come home. It is told me that he that kept your sheep was outlawed on Monday at the suit of Sir Thomas Todenham, and if it be so ye are not like to keep him long. And as touching that that ye bade me speak for to Bacton, he saith he is well advised that she said she would never have to do with all, nor he cannot pick that she hath none right to have it, and he will say like as he hath heard her say, and if she speak to him thereof he will rather hold with you than with her. I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how ye speed in your matter touching Gresham, and how Daniel is in grace. Harry Goneld hath brought to me 40*s.* of Gresham since ye

¹ [It does not appear who this Daniel, afterwards called Lord Daniel, was. During Jack Cade's rebellion, a bill of indictment was found, among several others, against Thomas Daniel, but that was as a friend and adherent of Suffolk. He may, however, have been the Thomas Daniel, constable of Castle Rising, who married a sister of John Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, mentioned in Letter cxxxix.]

² At this time William de la Pole, Marquess of

Suffolk, received the greatest marks of favour from the queen, and was very soon after the writing of this letter created Duke of Suffolk.

³ It appears that chains of gold were at this time worn as ornaments of dress, and that this gallant out did his contemporaries in the size of his.

⁴ The Sparhams were an ancient family, residing at Sparham, in Norfolk: this was the last male of that branch, and seems with himself to have finished his estate, &c.

went, and he saith I shall have more ere Whitsuntide if he may pick it up.

I suppose James Gresham have told you of other things that I have sped since ye went hence. If I hear any strange tidings in this country I shall send you word. I pray you that I may be recommended to my Lord Daniel.

The Holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters touching your right. Written at Norwich, on the Wednesday next after that ye parted hence.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich,
Wednesday, April, 1448.
26 H. VI.

LETTER XXI.—(VII. vol. i. p. 25.)

[THIS letter is from James Gresham to "mine especial master, John Paston, Esquire," conjectured to have been written on the 18th Oct. 1449. It relates the progress of some obscure lawsuits, and announces some political changes, but nothing of any peculiar interest, unless it be the following:—"On Monday last past was a great affray at Coventry, between the

Duke of Somerset's men and the watchmen of the town, and two or three men of the town were killed there, to (*the*) great disturbance of all the lords there, for the larum bell was rung, and the town arose, and would have jeopardied (*hazarded*) to have distressed the Duke of Somerset, &c. had not the Duke of Buckingham taken a direction therein.]

LETTER XXII.—(XVII. vol. iii. p. 63.)

[THIS is an authentic copy of the articles of impeachment exhibited against the Duke of Suffolk, taken at the time, and the purport of them may be found in several of our histories of that period.] These articles were exhibited in the beginning of February, 1449-50, when the duke was committed to the Tower, where his confinement was but short; as, upon the adjournment of the parliament to meet at Leicester in April, he then appeared there in his usual post as prime minister. I cannot help taking notice of the words of the last sentence of the first charge, "Wheruppon the same Duke of Suff^s sith ye tyme of heis areste hath do (*that is, hath caused*) the seid Margarete to be married to heis seid sonne." From these words it plainly appears that the duke immediately upon his arrest caused the marriage between his son and the Lady Margaret to be solemnised. I do not find that any of our historians mention this as a matter which actually took effect, but only as a matter which the duke had in contemplation, the lady at this time being only eight

or nine years old. Moreover, had this marriage been then really solemnised, it must have affected not only the legitimacy of the duke's children, but also the legitimacy of the Lady Margaret's son, Henry VII., as John Duke of Suffolk (the person here mentioned as her husband) lived till 1491; and she married Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, and by him had her son Henry (afterwards Henry VII.), about 1455. The renowned Lady Margaret here mentioned was the only daughter and heir of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, grandson of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. She married Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, by whom she was the mother of our King Henry VII. After the decease of this earl, she was successively the wife of Henry Stafford younger son of Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, and Thomas Stanley, Earl of Derby; after which last marriage she engaged herself in a vow of celibacy, and spent her time in prayer, almsgiving, and founding colleges. She died in 1509, when about seventy years old.

LETTER XXIII.—(VIII. vol. i. p. 29.)

Articles of impeachment were exhibited by the Commons in parliament against the Duke of Suffolk in February, 1449; and the king, to appease them, committed the Duke to the Tower: his enlargement from thence, &c. is here related; and it seems by what is here mentioned, that he appeared abroad usually with a guard. [The fact of the insecurity of Yarmouth and the coast of Norfolk is historically curious, and is strongly indicative of the disturbed state of the times. Mr. Fenn, we think, is slightly mistaken as to the Duke of Suffolk's guard; "his men again waiting upon him," is merely the numerous train common at that time with the great nobility. It is true they were frequently armed, and the reader will probably call to mind the conflicts between the retainers of the Duke of Gloster and the Bishop of Winchester, described by Shakspeare in this very reign; but they were not guards.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, &c. (*then follows some common business about his farms and tenants.*)

William Rutt, the which is with Sir John Heveningham,¹ came home from London yesterday, and he said plainly to his master, and to many other folks, that the Duke of Suffolk is pardoned, and hath his men again waiting upon him, and is right well and at ease and merry, and is in the king's good grace, and in the good conceit of all the lords, as well as ever he was.

There have been many enemies against Yarmouth and Cromer, and have done much harm, and taken many Englishmen, and put them in great distress, and greatly

(*heavily*) ransomed them; and the said enemies have been so bold that they come up to the land, and play them on Caister Sands and in other places, as homely as [*as much at home² as if*] they were Englishmen; folks be right sore afraid that they will do much harm this summer, but if (*unless*) there be made right great purveyance against them.

Other tidings know I none at this time; the blissful Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on Saint Gregory's day.

Yours, M. PASTON.

Norwich,
St. Gregory's Day,
Thursday, 12th of March,
1449. 28 II. VI.

LETTER XXIV.—(XVIII. vol. iii. p. 81.)

[This letter is from Robert the prior of Bromholm, "to my sovereign John Paston," written about March, 1449-50, requesting him "as I am your true beadsman as (*to*) labour for me here that I might have a writ of passage directed unto such men as you think that should best give me my charge." He adds, "Some counsel me to have a letter of exchange,

though it were but of forty shillings or less, but I commit all my best (*behest q?*)³ in this matter to your wisdom, and whatever ye pay in this matter, I shall truly at our meeting repay again to you." The prior was going to a bishop, but it is not said where, or upon what business.]

LETTER XXV.—(XIX. vol. iii. p. 85.)

I have given this letter as mentioning a tenure by petit sergeanty; these tenures were abolished by a statute, in the reign of Charles II., but the honorary services by grand sergeanty are still continued.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that the parson of Oxnead told me that Wyndham told him

that Swainsthorp is held of the king by the third part or the fourth part of a knight's fee, and whosoever had the manor of Swainsthorp

¹ The family of Heveningham had large possessions in Norfolk, and was a family of consequence in that county for many descents.

² [Fenn reads, "as much at their ease as if."]

³ [Behest is order or appoint. We rather think "all my best" means all for my best.]

he should find an armed man in time of war in the castle of Norwich forty days to his own cost, and that ye should pay 30s. to the king yearly out of the said manor; and it is found also that your father should have died seised, and that ye should have entered therein as heir after your father's decease, and that ye should be now upon the age of thirty winters.

The Trinity have you in his keeping; written at Norwich, the Friday next afore Saint George.

Yours,
M. PASTON.

Norwich,
Friday, April,
about 1450, 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXVI.—(IX. vol. i. p. 33.)¹

This affectionate letter, strongly inculcating his son's duty to God, his sovereign, and his parents, gives him good and fatherly counsel, as to his company, his conversation, and transactions in life; tells him, that in following the advice it contains, he will prosper in the world; and then, solemnly pronouncing a blessing on him, it concludes with a prayer for him and his posterity. May not this well-written epistle alone entitle this duke to a place amongst the noble authors of England? This advice, written so immediately upon his departure, and so short a time before his murder, must have made a deep impression on his son's mind; and doubtless in that age the letter was much admired, as even at this period of refined literature, it may be called a good and an affecting composition. [The Duke of Suffolk appears here in an entirely new character. History represents him, on very sufficient grounds, as ambitious, proud, revengeful, greedy, unfaithful alike to his king and to his country when his own interests could be served by the sacrifice of either. Hume (Hist. of Eng. chap. xx. xxi.) and the Pictorial History of England (vol. ii. p. 83, *et seq.*) display the real character of the man in his actions, and Shakspeare, in his Henry VI. Part ii., has vividly and no doubt correctly stated the popular opinion of the time as to his conduct. The captain who seizes him at sea, and, quibbling on his name, tells him, he is the pool or puddle—

“Whose filth and dirt,
Troubles the silver spring where England drinks,”

adds also that—

“By devilish policy art thou grown great,
And, like ambitious Sylla, overgorg'd
With gobbets of thy mother's bleeding heart.”

Probably, however, the Duke added hypocrisy to his other vices, and a staid and apparently devout demeanor may have been adopted by the favourite of the weak but pious Henry.]

The Copy of a notable letter, written by the Duke of Suffolk¹ to his Son,² giving him therein very good counsel.

My dear and only well-beloved son, I beseech our Lord in Heaven, the Maker of all the World, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him, and to dread him, to the which, as far as a father may charge his child, I both charge you, and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his holy laws and commandments, by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.

And that also, weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And there as (*whenever*) any frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.

Secondly, next him above all earthly things, to be true liegeman in heart, in will, in thought, in deed, unto the king our alder

¹ William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, succeeded his brother Michael, slain at the battle of Agincourt in 1415, as Earl of Suffolk; he was prime minister and favourite of Henry VI. and Queen Margaret, was created in 1443, 23 H. VI., Marquess, and in 1449 26 H. VI., Duke of Suffolk. He was banished by the king at the instigation of the Commons, &c. and murdered on the sea, on the 2d of May, 1450, 28 H. VI. He married Alice, widow of Thomas de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and daughter and

heir of Thomas Chaucer, Esq., of Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, and grand-daughter of Geoffrey Chaucer, the celebrated poet.

² John de la Pole (after his father's murder) Duke of Suffolk, &c. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and sister of Edward IV. He died in 1491, 7 H. VII. and was buried by his father at Wingfield in Suffolk. [See Letter xxvii.]

most (*greatest*) high and dread sovereign lord, to whom both ye and I be so much bound to; charging you as father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know anything that were against the welfare or prosperity of his most royal person, but that as far as your body and life may stretch ye live and die to defend it, and to let his highness have knowledge thereof in all the haste ye can.

Thirdly, in the same wise, I charge you, my dear son, alway as ye be bounden by the commandment of God to do, to love, to worship, your lady and mother; and also that ye obey alway her commandments, and to believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you. And if any other body would steer you to the contrary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye shall find it naught and evil.

Furthermore, as far as father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the company and counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, the more especially and mightily to withstand them, and not to draw nor to meddle with them, with all your might and power; and to draw to you and to your company good

and virtuous men, and such as be of good conversation, and of truth, and by them shall ye never be deceived nor repent you of.

Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise, but in all your works, of such folks as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and live in right much worship, and great heart's rest and ease.

And I will be to you as good lord and father as my heart can think.

And last of all, as heartily and as lovingly as ever father blessed his child in earth, I give you the blessing of Our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living; and that your blood may by his grace from kindred to kindred multiply in this earth to his service, in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye and they may glorify him eternally amongst his angels in heaven.

Written of mine hand,

The day of my departing fro this land.

Your true and loving father,

SUFFOLK.

April,
1450, 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXVII.—(X. vol. i. p. 39.)

To the right worshipful John Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful sir, I recommend me to you, and am right sorry of that I shall say, and have so washed this little bill with sorrowful tears, that uneths¹ (*scarcely*) ye shall read it.

As on Monday next after May day (4th of May) there came tidings to London, that on Thursday before (30th of April), the Duke of Suffolk came unto the coasts of Kent² full near Dover with his two ships and a little spinner; the which spinner he sent with certain letters, by certain of his trusted men, unto Calais ward, to know how he should be received; and with him met a ship called

Nicholas of the Tower³ with other ships waiting on him, and by them that were in the spinner the master of the Nicholas had knowledge of the duke's coming.

When he espied the duke's ships, he sent forth his boat to weet what they were, and the duke himself spoke to them, and said, he was by the king's commandment sent to Calais ward, &c., and they said he must speak with their master; and so he, with two or three of his men, went forth with them in their boat to the Nicholas; and when he came, the master bade him, "Welcome, traitor," as men say.

And further the master desired to weet if

¹ [Uneth is uneasily—i. e., with difficulty.]

² Some of our historians say that he put to sea from the coast of Norfolk.

³ This ship belonged to Bristol in 1442, 20 H. VI., and was a great ship, with fore-stages, and carried 150 men.

the shipmen would hold with the duke, and they sent word they would not in no wise; and so he was in the Nicholas till Saturday (2nd May) next following.

Some say he wrote much thing to be delivered to the king, but that is not verily known.

He had his confessor with him, &c.; and some say he was arraigned in the ship on their manner upon the Impeachments,¹ and found guilty, &c.

Also he asked the name of the ship, and when he knew it, he remembered Stacy that said, if he might escape the danger of the Tower he should be safe, and then his heart failed him, for he thought he was deceived.²

And in the sight of all his men he was drawn out of the great ship into the boat, and there was an axe and a stock, and one of the lowdest (*meanest*) of the ship bade him lay down his head, and he should be fairly ferd (*dealt*) with, and die on a sword; and took a rusty sword and smote off his head within [*in less than*] half a dozen strokes, and took away his gown of russet, and his doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his body on the sands of Dover: and some say his head was set on a pole by it; and his men set on the land by [*with*] great circumstance and prey [*parade and robbery*].³

¹ Impeachments by the Commons; this shows that these ships were sent out on purpose to take him, &c.

² [Shakspeare, who gives the details of his death with great historical accuracy, varies the nature of the prophecy. It is more than probable that the greater number of these predictions were formed after and made to fit the event, and Shakspeare may even have varied it to suit his scene; he could not so well have introduced the St. Nicholas of the Tower. Suffolk, on the sea-shore, says to one of his captors:—

“Thy name (Walter) affrights me, in whose sound is death;

A cunning man did calculate my birth;

And told me that by water I should die;

Yet let not this make thee be bloody-minded;

Thy name is Gualtier, being rightly sounded.”—

Henry VI., Part ii.]

³ [Fenn translates—“and his men sit on the land by great circumstance (q. *by great numbers*) and prey.” He then suggests another reading—“and his men (*were*) set on the land be (*together with*) great circumstance (*wealth*) and prey (*booty*).” The original is—“and hes men sette on the lond be grette circostⁿce and prey.” See also the second paragraph of the next letter.]

And the sheriff of Kent doth watch the body,⁴ and (*hath*) sent his under-sheriff to the judges to weet what to do; and also to the king (*to know*) what shall be done.

Further I wot not, but thus far is it, if the process be erroneous let his counsel reverse it, &c.

Also for all the other matters they sleep, and the fryar also, &c. Sir Thomas Keriell⁵ is taken prisoner and all the leg-harness, and about 3000 Englishmen slain.

Matthew Gooth⁶ (q. *Gough*), with 1500, fled, and saved himself and them. And Peris Brusy was chief captain, and had 10,000 Frenchmen and more, &c.

I pray you let my mistress, your mother, know these tidings, and God have you all in his keeping.

I pray you (*that*) this bill may recommend me to my mistresses, your mother and wife, &c.

James Gresham hath written to John of Dam, and recommeundeth him, &c.

Written in great haste at London, the 5th day of May, &c.

By your wife,

WILLIAM LOMNER.⁷

London, Tuesday,
5th of May, 1450,
28 H. VI.

⁴ His body was taken from Dover Sands, and carried to the collegiate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk, where it lies interred under an altar tomb, in the chancel, with his effigies in armour, painted, gilt, &c. carved in wood, lying on it. It is remarkably well executed, as is that of Alice his wife, likewise, which lies at his right hand. [This is a mistake of Fenn's. There are three monuments in Wingfield church to other members of the same family, but there is no memorial for him. They are engraved in Stothard's 'Monumental Effigies.'—See Gent. Mag. for Feb. 1840.]

⁵ He was taken prisoner at the battle of Fourmigni, fought on the 18th of April, 1450, where he defended himself with great bravery. He was beheaded by Queen Margaret's order, after the second battle of St. Alban's, in 1460.

⁶ Query if the brave Matthew Gough, who was afterwards slain in Cade's rebellion, fighting on the citizen's part, in July 1450, at the Battle of the Bridge.

⁷ [This singular subscription is explained by Mr. Fenn to have arisen from the fact of W. Lomner having been frequently employed as amanuensis by Marg. Paston, many of her letters being in the same handwriting, and that he had here forgotten at the instant in what capacity he was writing.]

LETTER XXVIII.—(XI. vol. i. p. 45.)

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, of Norwich, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful sir, I recommend me unto you in the most goodly wise that I can; and forasmuch as ye desired of me to send you word of divers matters here, which have been opened in the parliament openly, I send you of them such as I can.

First most especial, that for very truth upon Saturday that last was, the Duke of Suffolk was taken in the sea, and there he was beheaded, and his body with the appurtenance set at land at Dover; and all the folks that he had with him were set to land, and had none harm.

Also the king hath somewhat granted to have the resumption again, in some but not in all, &c.

Also if ye purpose to come hither to put up your bills, ye may come now in a good time, for now every man that hath any they put them in, and so may ye if ye come, with God's grace to your pleasure.¹

Furthermore, upon the 4th day of this month, the Earl of Devonshire² came hither with 300 men well beseen³ [*provided*], &c. and upon the morrow after, my Lord of Warwick, with 400 and more, &c.

Also as it is noised here, Calais shall be besieged within this seven days, &c.

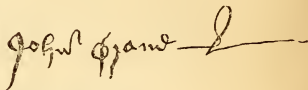
God save the king, and send us peace, &c.

Other tidings be there none here, but Almighty God have you in his keeping.

Written at Leicester, the 6th day of May.

Your cousin,

JOHN CRANE.⁴



Leicester,
Wednesday, 6th of May,
1450, 28 II. VI.

LETTER XXIX.—(XII. Vol. i. p. 53.)

Thomas Howys appears to have been a superintendent of Sir John Fastolf's affairs at Caister. He was rector of Blofield in Norfolk, from about 1460 to 1471; and was one of Sir John's executors. Castlecomb is in Wiltshire. [For a notice of Sir J. Fastolf, see a subsequent Letter.]

To my trusty and well-beloved friend, Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Castlecomb.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friend, I greet you well. (*Here follow some orders respecting his affairs at Caister.*) And I pray you send me word who dare be so hardy to kick against you in my right; and say (*to*) them on my half (*behalf*) that they shall be quyt⁵ [*requited*], as far as law and reason will; and if they will not dread nor obey that, then they shall be quyt by Blackbeard or

Whitebeard,⁶ that is to say, by God or the devil; and therefore I charge you, send me word whether such as have been mine adversaries before this time continue still in their wilfulness, &c.

Item, I hear oftentimes many strange reports of demenys⁷ of the governance of my place at Caister and other places, as in my chattell approving, in my wines, the keeping of my

¹ Here follows some advice relative to some private bills of J. Paston, to be presented to the parliament.

² Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was taken at the battle of Towton in 1461, and afterwards beheaded, by order of Edward IV., he having revolted from Edward to Henry VI.

³ [Fenn explains this word, "A fine body of men well arrayed and accoutred."]

⁴ The Cranes were a good family, flourishing at his time in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk,

and the writer of this letter appears to have belonged to the court.

⁵ [Fenn translates *quiet* in this and the following instance.]

⁶ Swearing, we are told by some of our historians, was the fashion of the time, and we are here presented with one of the usual oaths.

⁷ [Perhaps from the French *demence*, follies, madness; or *misdemeanors*. Fenn translates *the demeaning*. "As in my chattell approving," &c., is—as is proved in my chattels, &c.]

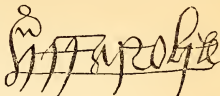
wardrobe and clothes, the avail [*use, profit*] of my conies at Hellesdon, &c., and improvement of my lands; praying you heartily, as my full trust is in you, to help reform it. And that ye suffer no vicious man at my place of Caister (*to*) abide, but well governed and diligent, as yet will answer to it.

Almighty God keep you. Written at

London, the 27th day of May, in the 28th year of the reign of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight*.

London,
Wednesday,
27th of May,
1450, 28 H.
VI.



LETTER XXX.—(XIII. vol. i. p. 55.)

This letter was written in 1465, 5 E. IV.; but it relates so entirely to a transaction in June and July, 1450, 28 H. VI. that I have thought it better to place it here, according to the date of the event it records, than according to the date of the time when it was written. It presents to us a certain and curious account of the commons of Kent, when assembled at Blackheath under Cade in 1450, and was written by J. Payn (then a servant to Sir John Fastolf) who was taken by them, carried about with them, and threatened to have been beheaded, &c. It truly shows to us the violence and barbarity of a body of men, collected chiefly from the meanest of the people, combined together for the pretended purpose of reformation; but really for the destruction of all good order and legal government. J. Payn had been formerly a servant to Sir John Fastolf of some consequence, and was now a petitioner for some relief, on account of his losses and misfortunes, while a prisoner, &c., with the rebels, from John Paston, one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf's will.

To my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT honourable and my right entirely beloved master, I recomend me unto you with all manner of due reverence in the most lowly wise, as me ought to do, evermore desiring to hear of your worshipful state, prosperity, and welfare; the which I beseech (*beseech*) God, of his abundant grace, increase and maintain to his most pleasance and to your heart's desire.

Pleaseth it, your good and gracious master-ship, tenderly to consider the great losses and hurts that your poor petitioner hath, and hath had, ever since the commons of Kent came to the Blackheath, and that is at fifteen years passed; whereas my master, Sir John Fastolf, knight, that is your testator, commanded your beseecher to take a man, and two of the best horses that were in his stable, with him, to ride to the commons of Kent to get the articles that they come for; and so I did, and all so soon as I came to the Blackheath, the captain¹ made the commons to take me; and for the savation (*saving*) of my master's horses, I made my fellow to ride away with the two horses; and

I was brought forthwith before the Captain of Kent; and the captain demanded (*of*) me, what was my cause of coming thither, and why that I made my fellow to steal away with the horses; and I said that I came thither to cheer with my wife's brethren, and others that were mine allies, and gossips of mine, that were present there; and then was there one there and (*who*) said to the captain that I was one of Sir John Fastolf's men, and the two horses were Sir John Fastolf's; and then the captain let cry Treason upon me throughout all the field, and brought me at four parts of the field, with a herald of the Duke of Exeter² before me, in the Duke's coat-of-arms, making four oyez at four parts of the field; proclaiming openly by the said herald, that I was sent thither for to espy their puissance and their habiliments of war, from the greatest traitor that was in England or in France, as the said captain made proclamation at that time, from one Sir John Fastolf, knight, the which diminished (*diminished*) all the garrisons of Normandy, and Mauns, and Mayn, the

¹ Jack Cade; he called himself John Mortimer, of the house of March, he was likewise styled Captain Mend-all.

² It cannot be supposed that the Duke of Exeter,

a faithful Lancastrian, took any part in this commotion, but it is probable his herald might be forced into the service of the rebels [or the herald might have joined the rebels of his own accord].

which was the cause of the losing of all the king's title and right of an heritage that he had beyond sea. And moreover, he said that the said Sir John Fastolf had furnished his place¹ with the old soldiers of Normandy, and habiliments of war, to destroy the commons of Kent when that they came to Southwark, and therefore he said plainly that I should lose my head; and so forthwith I was taken, and led to the captain's tent, and one axe and one block was brought forth to have smitten off mine head; and then my master Poynyngs² your brother, with other of my friends came, and letted (*prevented*) the captain, and said plainly, that there should die an hundred or two that in case be that I died; and so by that mean my life was saved at that time.

And then I was sworn to the captain, and to the commons, that I should go to Southwark and array me in the best wise that I could, and come again to them to help them; and so I got the articles, and brought them to my master, and that cost me more amongst the commons that day than 27s.

Whereupon I came to my master Fastolf, and brought him the articles, and informed him of all the matter, and counselled him to put away all his habiliments of war, and the old soldiers, and so he did, and went himself to the Tower, and all his meny³ [*household*] with him but Betts and one Matthew Brayn; and had I not been, the commons would have brenned (*burnt*) his place and all his tenuries; where though it cost me of my own proper goods at that time more than six marks (4*l.*) in meat and drink, and (*yet*) notwithstanding the captain that same time let take me at the White Hart in Southwark, and there commanded Lovelace to despoil me out of mine array, and so he did; and there he took a fine gown of muster devillers⁴ furred with fine beavers,

and one pair of brigandines⁵ covered with blue velvet and gilt nails, with leg-harness; the value of the gown and the brigandines 8*l.*

Item, the captain sent certain of his meny to my chamber in your rents,⁶ and there (*they*) broke up my chest, and took away one obligation of mine that was due unto me of 36*l.* by a priest of Paul's, and one other obligation of one knight of 10*l.*, and my purse with five rings of gold, and 17*s.* 6*d.* of gold and silver; and one harness complete of the touch of Milan: and one gown of fine perse blue, furred with martens; and two gowns, one furred with bogey, (*budge*), and one other lined with frieze; and there would have smitten off mine head when that they had despoiled me at (*the*) White Hart; and there my master Poynyngs and my friends saved me, and so I was put up, till at night that the battle was at London Bridge; and then at night the captain put me out into the battle at the bridge, and there I was wounded, and hurt near hand to death; and there I was six hours in the battle, and might never come out thereof; and four times before that time I was carried about throughout Kent and Sussex, and there they would have smitten off my head; and in Kent there as (*where*) my wife dwelled, they took away all our goods moveable that we had; and there would have hanged my wife and five of my children, and left her no more goods but her kirtle and her smock; and anon after that hurling (*commotion*), the Bishop of Rochester⁷ impeached me to the queen, and so I was arrested by the queen's commandment into the Marshalsea, and there was in right great duress, and fear of mine life, and was threatened to have been hanged, drawn, and quartered; and so (*they*) would have made me have impeach my master Fastolf of treason,⁸

¹ [This must mean Fastolf's house in Southwark, alluded to in Letter cxxxi.]

² Robert Poynyngs married Elizabeth, the sister of J. Paston, and was sword-bearer and carver to Cade.

³ [Fenn translates—*family*.]

⁴ Probably some kind of velvet.

⁵ A coat of mail, consisting of many-jointed and scale-like plates, &c.

⁶ [Rents is a house or building. The term exists yet in London, in Fulwood's Rents, near Gray's Inn, and a few other instances.]

⁷ John Lowe, a learned divine.

⁸ Why this attempt was made upon him to accuse his master, Sir John Fastolf, of treason I cannot conceive, unless it was, because Sir John left his house, &c. in Southwark, and retired to the Tower, instead of resisting and attacking the rebels.

and because that I would not, they had me up to Westminster, and there would have sent me to the gaol-house at Windsor, but my wife's and one cousin of mine own, that were yeomen of the crown, they went to the

king, and got grace and one charter of pardon.
Per le vostre,

J. PAYN.

June and July, 1450. 28 H. VI.,
but written 1463. 5 E. IV.

LETTER XXXI.—(XX. vol. iii. p. 87.)

After J. Paston had received this letter, it seems as if he had sent it to my Lord Oxford, for on the back of it, in J. Paston's hand-writing, is the following direction. "To the rith worsfull and my rith speciaall Lord my Lord of Oxenford." The estates in dispute between J. Paston and my Lord Molyns were at Gresham in Norfolk, where Sir William Paston, the judge, had purchased the moiety of a manor, &c. of Thomas Chaueer, Esq. The other moiety now in dispute had been in the possession of the ancestors of Ellenor (now the wife of Robert Hungerford, Lord Molyns), who was the daughter and heir of Sir William Molyns, Lord Molyns, who was killed at the siege of Orleans in 1428, and had likewise come into Sir William's possession. The disputes were carried on for several years, and how at last finally settled I know not.

To my right especial master, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worthy worshipful Sir, and mine especial master, I recommend me to you, and pray you weet that I was yesterday at my Lord Chancellor's¹ house, and there I spake with White, and he told me that he had the letter that ye sued for from . . . , directed to the Lord Molyns of that substance that ye had sued to him for an especial assise² and an oyer and determiner,³ and that he should command his men being at Gresham to depart thence, and that the profits thereof should be received by an indifferent person, safely to be kept till the right were determined between you and my Lord Molyns, &c., which letter White sent forth by a man of my Lord Chancellor to the Lord Molyns. And he sent his answer in writing of this substance, that it should not like my Lord Chancellor to grant assise, &c., forasmuch as the Lord Molyns had sore be-laboured in his country to pease (*appease*) and still the people⁴ there to restrain them from rising, and so he was daily laboured there about in the king's service, and that considered, he trusted verily that there should none assise be granted to your intent; and he said further in his answer, if he might attend to be in Nor-

folk, and leave the necessary service that he did to the king now in Wiltshire, he would be but well pleased that you had your assise, for he knew his title and his evidence so good for his part, that he durst well put it in my Lord Chancellor and in what judge he would call to him; and where (*as*) my Lord Chancellor desired him to avoid his men, from Gresham, he trusted that my lord would not desire that, because he had his possession, and that it was his wife's right, and so him thought it against reason that he should avoid utterly his possession.

This same Monday goeth my Lord Chancellor and my Lord of Buckingham into Kent, to sit upon an oyer and determiner⁵ at Rochester, and White told me that there is written a general oyer and determiner to be in Norfolk; and that therefore, and for the Lord Molyns writing, him seemeth it is not to your avail to sue for an especial assise nor for an oyer and determiner.

When I came hitherward, I met with my Lord of Norfolk, between Barkway and Baberham homeward, and whether he shall come again hither or not I wot not, but I trow ra-

¹ William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, he was soon after succeeded by John Kemp, Archbishop of York.

² A writ directed to the sheriff for recovery of possession of things immoveable, whereof yourself or ancestors have been disseised.

³ Is a commission especially granted to certain persons for the hearing and determining of causes,

and was formerly only in use upon some sudden outrage or insurrection in any place.

⁴ These disturbances amongst the people were the remains of Cade's rebellion, which had been lately suppressed.

⁵ These commissions of oyer and determiner were to try those who had been concerned in the late rebellion under Cade.

ther yes than nay, for it is said that all the lords be sent for to be here on Monday or Tuesday next coming for a council.

The Chief Justice¹ is not here, nor none other justice, except Danvers,² (*who*) is now made Judge of the Common Pleas, and is forth into Kent with the lords, &c.

All this tofore was written on the Monday next after our Lady-day (17th of August), and this same Wednesday was it told that Cherburg is gone, and we have not now a foot of land in Normandy, and men are afraid that Calais will be besieged hastily, &c. Pynchamore shall tell you by mouth more than I have leisure to write now to you. I wrote to

mine em.³ that there were nine or ten thousand men up in Wiltshire, and I had it of the report of Whittock's mede (? *maid*) but I trow it is not so, for here is now little speech thereof, nevertheless if I hear more I shall send you word hereafter by some loaders (*carriers*) that come to Saint Bartholomew's fair.

Written in haste at London, the Wednesday next after our Lady-day, &c. (*the Assumption, 15th August.*)

Your own simple Servant,
JAMES GRESHAM.

London,
Wednesday, 19th of August, 1450,
28 H. VI.

LETTER XXXII.—(XXI. vol. iii. p. 93.)

I have given this letter, as it informs us of the price and value of land at this period. Fourteen years' purchase seems high, since it does not appear that Sir John bought it for its convenience, as he mentions selling it again. By calling it "Heigham's Place," I suppose there was a house as well as land. In 1470, twenty years after this time, the reward offered for apprehending the Duke of Clarence was 1000*l.* in money, or 100*l.* a year in land. This seems to fix land at that period at only ten years' purchase; perhaps the preceding civil wars had caused this abatement in its value. [This Sir John Fastolf seems to have been a thoroughly worldly, money-getting man, and his letters must set at rest the statement that Shakspeare had him in his mind in his character of Sir John Falstaff. There is, indeed, not one feature of resemblance.]

To my right trusty friend Sir Thomas Howys, parson of Castlecombe, being at Caister, and William Barker, in haste, at Caister Inn, by Yarmouth.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well, and as for Heigham's Place to be sold, as ye advise me to buy it at the sum of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or within, and reserving in the said payment mine own duty, and pay the remanent in wool to the said Heigham's creditors, as your letter maketh mention; I have understood that William Jenney shall be here this week, and I shall veele (*feel*) him how near it may be sold; for if the widow will sell it after fourteen year or fifteen year, that it may be lett, send me ut-

terly word, for I will not melle (*meddle*) of it else thus advised; and send ye me word how much more in value in a stone shall I sell my wool, and how another chapman will give me for the place when I have bought it; but after [*the rate of?*] fourteen year I would buy the place.

Written at London, the 15th day of October, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF.

London,
Thursday, 15th of October, 1450, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XXXIII.—(XXII. vol. iii. p. 95.)

[This letter is from James Gresham in London, to J. Paston at Norwich, dated about October,

1450, and contains merely details of legal proceedings, in which J. Paston was engaged.]

¹ John Hody was at this time Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

² Robert Danvers became a judge of the Common Pleas 14th of August, 1450.

³ Quere this abbreviated word. [It is most probably *eme*, uncle.—See the same word used in a like doubtful sense at page 4.]

LETTER XXXIV.—(XXIII. vol. iii. p. 101.)

[This letter is from J. Damme and J. Gresham, to J. Paston, and like the last, contains merely legal details of no general interest. This

James Gresham was an eminent lawyer, and great-grandfather to Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange.]

LETTER XXXV.—(XXIV. vol. iii. p. 103.)

I have presented this letter to the reader, to show him that the forging of deeds, grants, &c., was a common offence many centuries ago; here it mentions an acquittance as being forged, and likewise an office forgery, which would affect Sir John's manor of Bradwell. At the time here mentioned, forgery was an offence at common law only, and the punishment was usually fine and imprisonment. [Sir John seems to have been an active litigator, and his accusation against the "parson of Stratford" is an interesting little picture of the manners of the times. It must not, however, be supposed that the damage of which Sir John complains was either wantonly or feloniously done; it was evidently upon some disputed claim of rights.]

To my right trusty friend and servant, Sir Thomas (Howys), parson of Castlecombe, and John Bocking, at Prince's Inn, in Norwich or at Beccles.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved servant, I greet you well; and forasmuch as I understand that on Monday next the oyer and terminer shall be holden at Beccles, and ye advise to send you a certificate for cause of the forged quittance by Sir John Sypton, which writing I send you by the bearer hereof, praying you that ye solicit to my counsel that the said Sir John Sypton be indicted thereupon, and that ye forget not Ulveston, Andrews, and the others, that forged a false office to cast my manor of Bradwell into the king's hand.

Item, I send you a copy of Sypton's plea and quittance forged, to ground your bill by it.

No more for haste, but God keep you: written at London, the 4th day of December, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

Item, Sir John Buck, parson of Stratford, fished my stanks at Dedham, and helped to break my dam, destroyed my new mill, and was against me always at Dedham, to the damage of 20*l*. which may be indicted also.

Item, he and John Cole hath by force this year, and other years, taken out of my waters at Dedham, to the number of twenty-four swans and cygnets, and I pray you this be not forgotten.

JOHN FASTOLF.

London,
Friday, 4th of December, 1450, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XXXVI.—(XXV. vol. iii. p. 107.)

This letter was written by John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, to the high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, in consequence of his having been informed that he intended to quash certain bills against particular persons, and not suffer them to appear at the next sessions, &c. This sentence in the original letter is ambiguous from an omission of a word or two, but I think the above is the true meaning of it. [By the omission of the word *to*, which we have included in brackets, we think the sense is clear.] These commissions were sent out in November 1450, soon after the suppression of Cade's rebellion, to try those who were imprisoned in different parts of the kingdom for the part they had then taken. The Earl seems to express himself as friendly to the people, and wishes to be a mean of redressing their grievances. He married Elizabeth, sole daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight, by which marriage he became possessed of the manor of East Winch, in the county of Norfolk. He was beheaded when about 55 years of age, in 1461.

To my right trusty and entirely well-beloved John Jermyn,¹ Sheriff of Norfolk.

RIGHT trusty and entirely well beloved, I greet you well, and where (*as*) late by the king's commandment in the time of his parliament

holden now last at Westminster, I was in person at Norwich, holding sessions of oyer (*and*) determiner with Yelverton, one of the king's

¹ John Jermyn, the high sheriff, was ancestor to Sir Thomas Jermyn of Rushbrooke, in Suffolk, who

was created a peer by Charles I. in 1643; but this family became extinct in 1708.

judges, by great space and great attendance, which for to have done with such diligence in the parliament time I would have been right loath, but for the public weal of all the shire.

It is not also out of your remembrance what indisposition the commons of both counties in the end of summer last passed were of, and how the king, by the whole advice of all the great council of England, to cease their rumour sent hither his said commission, and how I have done my part therein I report me to all the world; I hear a grudging, nevertheless, that through favour in your office, [to] the people that hath complained by many and great horrible bills against certain persons, should not be showed at this next sessions at Lynn,¹ nor farther in the said commission; which if it so were, as God defend (*forbid*), might cause a latter error worse than the first.

I pray you therefore that ye would write to me your disposition how ye purpose to be demeaned, and how I shall take you for the ex-

cution of the king's commission and the public weal of all the shire; and after that that ye write to me, so will I take you, letting you weet that I were loath to labour farther but if (*unless*) I wist that the commons should be eased, as God's law would, and if any errors grow, the default shall not be found in me.

I pray you moreover to give credence to the bearer hereof, and the Trinity keep you.
Written at Winch, the 2nd day of January,
The EARL of OXFORD.

Winch,
Saturday, 2nd of January, 1450.
29 H. VI.

Edmund Beaufort 

NUMBER XXXVII. (XXVI. Vol. iii. p. 109.)

That the reader may the better understand the matters here referred to, it will be necessary just to mention the leading transactions which occasioned this accusation. The parliament met at Westminster in the latter end of the year 1450, when the Duke of Somerset, returning from France, was so publicly censured for the loss of Normandy, that the Commons petitioned the king to send him to the Tower; it might be therefore at this time that the Duke of Norfolk made this speech in the House of Lords; the Duke of Somerset, however, was released as soon as the parliament broke up. But as Guicene (which stands as part of the charge against him here) was not completely lost before the year 1453, when this Duke was again committed to the Tower, and an accusation brought against him by the Commons before the Lords, it is, I think, most probable that it was then that the Duke of Norfolk stepped forwards as his accuser. The exact time, however, is immaterial, as the force and energy of the speech remain the same whenever it was spoken, and that it was spoken is evident, from that sentence in which he says, "Wherefor for to abbrege my langage, &c." Though concise, it is nervous, full to the purpose, and artfully addressed to the passions both of the noble Lords and the people in general, and in form and method would not disgrace a modern orator. Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, after the death of the Duke of Suffolk became the queen's favourite and prime minister, and was both a valiant soldier and an able statesman: he fell in the first battle of St. Alban's, where he commanded the royal army, in May 1455. John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded his father in 1435, and died in 1461. These dukes were both of them great-grandsons to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The first by his father, the second by his mother. On the top of the paper on which this speech is written is the word *cûp*, meaning "*copy*," which shows that this was copied from the original paper for the Duke's own use, as the paper and hand-writing are both of the time of Henry VI. And at the bottom is written "Einsi signe M. Norff." [It is certainly a most interesting specimen of our early and genuine parliamentary oratory, although in one particular instance the language is more plain spoken than is now allowed.]

The speech of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, against Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, in the House of Lords.

My Lords, ye know well enough the great pains, labours, and diligences, that before

this time I have done, to the intent that the over great disbonours and losses that be come to this full noble realm of England, by the false means of some persons that have taken on them over great authority in this realm,

¹ [Shewed—i. e., the bills should not be exhibited; the term now used in some law proceedings—articles of the peace, for instance.]

should be known. And that the persons living that have done them should be corrected after the merits of their deserts. And to that intent I have denounced, and delivered to you in writing, certain articles against the Duke of Somerset, which is one of them that is guilty thereof; whereto the Duke of Somerset hath answered; and to that that he hath answered, I have replied in such wise that I trow to be sure enough that there shall be no vailable thing be said to the contrary of my said replication; and as much as he would say shall be but falseness and leasings, as by the probations [*proofs*] that shall be made thereupon shall now¹ [*be able to*] appear; howbeit that to all people of good intendment, knowing how justice ought to be ministered, it is full apparent that the denunciations against him made be sufficiently proved by deeds that have followed thereof; whereupon I have required to have overture of justice by you, which ye have not yet done to me, whereof I am so heavy that I may no longer bear it, specially since the matter by me pursued is so worshipful for all the realm, and for you, and so agreeable to God, and to all the subjects of this realm, that it may be no greater; and it is such that for any favour of lineage, nor for any other cause there should be no dissimulation, for doubt lest that other in time coming take example thereof; and lest that the full noble virtue of justice, that of God is so greatly recommended, be extinct or quenched by the false opinions of some, that for the great bribes that the said Duke of Somerset hath promised and given them, have turned their hearts from the way of truth and of justice; some, saying that the cases by him committed be but cases of trespass, and others, taking a colour to make an universal peace; whereof every man that is true to the said crown hath² greatly to marvel that any man would say that the loss of two so noble duchies as Normandy and Guyenne, that be well worth a great realm, coming by successions of fathers and mothers to the said crown, is but trespass; whereas it hath been

seen in many realms and lordships, that, for the loss of towns or castles without siege, the captains that have lost them have been dead and beheaded, and their goods lost: as in France one that lost Cherburgh; and also a knight that fled for dread of battle should be beheaded; so that all these things may be found in the laws written, and also in the book cleped (*called*) "*L'arbre de Bataille*;" wherefore, for to abridge my language, I require you that forasmuch as the more part of the deeds committed by the said Duke of Somerset (*have*) been committed in the realm of France, that, by the laws of France, process be made thereupon; and that all things that I have delivered and shall deliver, be seen and understood by people having knowledge thereof, and that the deeds committed by him in this realm be in like wise seen and understood by people learned in the laws of this land; and for proof thereof to grant commissions to inquire thereof, as by reason and of custom it ought to be done, calling God and you all, my lords, to witness of the devours by me done in this said matter; and requiring you that this my bill, and all other my devours may be enacted before you, and that I may have it exemplified under the king's great seal for my discharge and acquittal of my truth, making protestation that in case that ye make not to me overture of justice upon the said case, I shall for my discharge do my pain that my said devours and the said lack of justice shall be known through all this realm.

Ainsi Signe,

JOHN MOWERAY, *Norfolk*.

1450, or 1453. 29 or 32 H. VI.

¹ [See other instances of the use of this word, in the Introduction. Fenn here explains it, as *more-over* or *soon*. It is indeed our present word *may*,

which, as well as *can*, was frequently used in the sense of *being able to*, *having the power to*.]

² [Fenn's translation—*ought*.]

LETTER XXXVIII.—(XXVII. vol. iii. p. 117.)

This very curious letter gives us a true picture of the proceedings in our courts of justice at this time. We find those in the highest departments of the law openly partial; and that the suitors in the court came attended by large parties of friends in military array to drive away their opponents; from this the wisdom of our present regulation is apparent, when all soldiers are ordered to quit the town in which assizes are holden during the time of their continuance, lest it should be supposed they might befriend one and intimidate the other party in any legal process: this proceeding is now always enforced, unless when any daring offender against the laws is to be tried, and there are any apprehensions of an intended rescue. To the honour of our country it may be truly said, that our judges for ages past have been, not only thought, but always found, superior to either bribery, corruption, or partiality; and to the immortal honour of our present sovereign King George III., it ought to be ever remembered, that he, in the beginning of his reign, appointed his judges for life, who, before, held their high office only during the royal pleasure. It does not appear what the business was which caused these complaints against the proceedings. [Nor does it appear to us so clearly as to Sir John Fenn that this letter contains any *proofs* of the partiality of the judges, or of the overawing of the court: in fact, the last was unnecessary if the opposite party were assured of the other. It is the common complaint in all times of a defeated suitor, and from what we have seen of Sir J. Fastolf, and even of Master Paston, we should not hastily conclude that their cases were always just and right. The present was an age of forms, particularly in legal matters, and no doubt these forms were often taken advantage of to defeat right, and thus produce oppression. But these were accidents inherent to the system, and are by no means to be taken as wilful and partial on the part of the judges.]

To my reverend and worshipful master, Sir John Fastolf, knight, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful master, I commend me lowly unto you; please you to weete the Sunday, next after the feast of the¹ Invention of the Cross, the 9th day of May, at Caister, I received a letter from you by your clerk, W. Barker, the tenour whereof I shall do speed in all haste goodly; but for the more special cause of my writing at this time is to give you relation of the untrue demeaning this oyer (and) determiner, by the partiality of the judges of it, for when the counsel of the city of Norwich, of the town of Swaffham, yours, my master Inglos, Pastons, and many others plaintiffs, had put in and declared both by writing and by word before the judges the lawful exceptions in many wise, the judges by their wilfulness might not find in their heart to give not as much as a beck nor a twinkling of their eye toward, but took it to derision—God reform such partiality; and because Prisot² thought that if the sessions of the oyer and determiner had been holden at Norwich as they begun, he supposed it should not so fast pass to the intent of Todenham, and Heydon, and their fellows, as it should do else in other place,

but enjoined (*adjourned*) to Walsingham, where they have greatest rule, there to be holden on Tuesday, 4th day of May.

This knowing, my Master Yelverton,³ Jenney, and others might well conceive how the governance of the oyer and determiner should proceed, for it was the most partial place of all the shire, and thither were cleped (*called*) all the friends, knights, and esquires, and other gentlemen that would in no wise do otherwise than they would, and the said Todenham, Heydon, and other oppressors of their set, came down thither, as I understand, with 400 horse and more, and considering how their well-willers were there assembled at their instance, it had been right jeopardous and fearful for any of the plaintiffs to have been present, for there was not one of the plaintiffs nor complainants there, but your right faithful and trusty well-willer John Paston. And my Master Yelverton said full discreetly, and controlled the said Prisot when he said, sitting in the Guildhall of Norwich, these words to the mayor and the commonalty:—

“A Sir Mayor and your brethren, as to

¹ The 3rd of May.

² In 1443 John Privot [*Prisot* uniformly in the original] was made a serjeant at law, and in 1449 was appointed Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, which post he held till 1462, when he was succeeded by Robert Danby.

³ Sir William Yelverton, of Rougham, in Norfolk,

became a serjeant at law in 1440, was made a judge of the King's Bench in 1444, created a Knight of the Bath in 1460, and was alive in 1467. He married first Jane, daughter of Oliver le Gros, Esq., of sloley, in Norfolk; secondly, Ela, daughter of Sir Robert Brewse, of Wetingham, in Suffolk, by each of whom he left issue.

the process of your complaints we will put them in continuance, but in all other we will proceed," which words Yelverton thought right partial; and beside this, the said Prisot would suffer no man that was learned to speak for the plaintiffs, but took it as a venom, and took them by the nose at every third word, which might well be known for open partiality.

And as for the Lord Scales,¹ ye know well what he is towards you, and namely for Hickling matter. Also to know some of your feint friends, at the time that my Lord of Norfolk sat at Norwich upon the oyer and determiner, Sir John Heveningham might not find it in his heart to go four furlongs from his dwelling-place to the shire-house, but now he could ride from Norwich to Walsingham to sit as one of the commissioners; as to the rule of others, that ye would have supposed your well-willers, how they have behaved at Walsingham I shall send you word in all haste when Berney come home to Caister, for he is not yet come from Walsingham, but this I know well, that they found none obstacle nor impediment in their conscience in all your matter, but how they have done with Norwich, Swaffham, and Paston, I am not yet clearly informed, I suppose they are put in respite; I hear say Heydon sueth for an end to be had with the city of Norwich; and as to the names of them that passed on their acquittal against you, Broyn² can well inform you, I understand that Sir Robert Conyers, Calthorp,³ (and) Mundford⁴ were captains, and Master Richard Doget also.

Item, as for the two "venire facias," ye sent to be returned for your manors of Bradwell and Beyton, I have done them to be returned of such names as I have sent word before, saving some be taken and excepted out. Moreover, as for the matter of Sir John Sybton; Geney and Rawlins give full counsel that it should abide till the matter of Bradwell might proceed, so that both matters might take upon a day, for they say it will draw twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to labour the jury to London, and yet it were hard to bring about; and they give you counsel in all wise that ye labour to have Yelverton judge at that time, and in all wise, both in that matter and in all others, that ye beware that Prisot have not to have do in anywise, for then all will be nought. Of all other matters I shall send you word in all haste goodly, for at this time I had no leisure because of the hasty coming up of Hugh Fenn, whom I beseech you to feel of the demeaning of the oyer and determiner, for he can tell you much and (if) he will, whether he will or nay I cannot say; for I know well he was at Walsingham. And I beseech Almighty Jesu have you in his merciful governance.

Written at Caister the Sunday 9th day of May, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

Caister, Sunday 9 May, 1451, 29 H. VI.

On the back of the letter is written,

I pray you be not displeased though I have not subscribed my name within forth, for it is of negligence, saith Howys, parson of Castlecomb.

LETTER XXXIX.—(XXVIII. vol. iii. p. 125.)

The former part of this letter is of little consequence; we learn from it, indeed, that misrepresentations subversive of good neighbourhood proceeded then as now from servants and others. In the latter part we find treacle spoken of as a medicine of great efficacy and consequence. Sir Henry Inglos's will was proved on the 4th of July, 1451, by which he desired to be buried in the Presbytery of the Priory of St. Faith, at Horsham St. Faith's, in Norfolk, a priory founded by Robert de Caen, in 1105, in memory of a miraculous delivery from imprisonment by his prayers to God and St. Faith the Virgin. The removal of his body so immediately after his death seems extraordinary.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your wel-

fare, praying you to weet that I have spoken with my Lady Felbrigg of that ye bade me

¹ Thomas Lord Scales was a Knight of the Garter: he left an only daughter and heir married to Sir Anthony Widdville, who in her right was summoned to parliament as Baron Scales in 1461.

² [Brayn, perhaps, who is mentioned in page 22.]

³ He was of a very ancient and flourishing family at this time, in the county of Norfolk, but which is now extinct in the male line.

⁴ This was an ancient family, formerly situated at Feltwell, in Norfolk.

speak to her of, and she said plainly to me that she would not, nor never was advised [*never had thought*], neither to let the Lord Molyns nor none other to have their intents as for that matter while that she liveth; and she was right evil paid with Sauter, that he should report as it was told you that he should have reported; and she made right much of you, and said that she would nought that no servant of hers should report nothing that should be against you, otherwise than she would that your servants should do or say against her; and if either your servants did against her, or any of hers against you, she would that it should be reformed betwixt you and her, and that ye might be all one; for she said in good faith she desired your friendship; and as for the report of Sauter, she said she supposed that he would nought report so, and if she might know that he did, she would blame him therefore; I told her that it was told me since that ye rode, and that it grieved me more that the said Sauter should report as he did than it had been reported of another, inasmuch as I had ought him good will before; and she prayed me that I should not believe such reports till I knew the truth.

I was at Topps's at dinner on St. Peter's day: there my Lady Felbrigg and other gentlemen desired to have had you there; they said they should all have been the merrier if ye had been there. My cousin Topps hath much care till she hears good tidings of her brother's matter; she told me that they should

keep a day on Monday next coming betwixt her brother and Sir Andrew Hugard (*Ogard*) and Wyndham; I pray you send me word how they speed, and how ye speed in your own matters also.

Also, I pray you heartily that ye will send me a pot with treacle in haste, for I have been right evil at ease and your daughter both, since that ye yeden (*went*) hence, and one of the tallest young men of this parish lyeth sick, and hath a great myrr¹ (*murrain* q?) how he shall do God knoweth.

I have sent my uncle Berney the pot with treacle that ye did buy for him; mine aunt recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to do for her as the bill maketh mention of that I send you with this letter, and as ye think best for to do therein. Sir Harry Inglos is passed to God this night, whose soul God assoil; and was carried forth this day at nine of the clock to St. Faith's, and there shall be buried.

If ye desire to buy any of his stuff, I pray you send me word thereof in haste, and I shall speak to Robert Inglos, and to Wichingham thereof; I suppose they be executors. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich in haste on the Thursday next after St. Peter.

I pray you trust not to the sheriff² for no fair language. Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Thursday,
1st of July, 1451, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XL.—(XXIX. vol. iii. p. 129.)

This letter relates to what passed at Blackheath when the commons of Kent assembled there under Jack Cade, in 1450, when Robert Poyning was his sword-bearer and carver, who afterwards married Elizabeth, the sister of John Paston. It could not be written before 1451, as it gives an account of Poyning's pardon, and of the priest's confession who had accused the Lords Cromwell and Grey, and Sir John Fastolf, of treason.

To my Master Paston.

PLEASE your good mastership to weet, that as yesterday came letters from London that the parson must needs up to London to save the next amerciament; and so (*he*) is forth to appear, if he needs must, xv Johannis (*quin-*

sieme Johannis, 8 July) as ye shall see by Barker's letter, and shall be to morn (*to-morrow*) at London, and with God's grace he shall be relieved by the mean of the parliament; by Sunday ye shall have weeting.

¹ If myrr here signifies murrain, it must mean a consumption.

² John Clopton was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk this year.

As for my master (*Sir J. Fastolf*), he departeth not to London till the next week after this, and he ride.

As for tidings be none truth, but Poynnyngs is quit and delivered of all treasons; and Sir William Oldhall's process in the King's Bench (*is*) reversed; and the priest that accused Lords Cromwell,¹ Grey,² and my master³ will confess who caused him to do it, so that he may have his life, &c.

As soon as ye goodly may to see my master it shall be to him a singular pleasure. Sir, a bailiff of my master's is in Drayton. John Edmond brought a letter to you, and he sent me weeting he was shent (*blamed*) upon some matter, as he supposeth, contained in the latter. I pray you in right be his good

master, and that I may weete the cause, for I doubt he shall and must obey if he hath offended.

At Caister the noneday,⁴ 7th day (*of*) July.

Your

WILLIAM WORCESTER.

Caister,
Noneday,
7th July,
about 1457.
29 H. VI.

On the top of this letter, in a different hand, is written:—

Prove untruth in the undersheriff, or that he did otherwise than your counsel advised him, and Paston shall demean him accordingly.⁵

LETTER XLI.—(XXX. vol. iii. p. 133.)

This letter affords a curious instance of Sir John Fastolf's resolution in determining to attack a religious society in the courts of law, and that he should do so by the advice of his confessors appears very extraordinary; but I suppose they were seculars, and they had always a dislike to the regular clergy. [And it goes far to prove what we have suggested in a previous letter, that the law courts might be, and were, relied on for the attainment of justice, for otherwise the keen and worldly-prudent Sir J. Fastolf would have done much to avoid coming before such a court against such adversaries.]

To my trusty friend, Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Castlecombe, being at Caister.

RIGHT trusty friend, I greet you well, and whereas the Bishop of Norwich⁶ maketh but delays in my reasonable desire for an end to be had in the xxv marks (16*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of Hickling, I am upon an appointment and thorough with the heir of Clifford that he shall enter in the whole manor that is chargeable with my xxv marks rent,⁷ which the prior and convent have forfeited the said whole manor to the heirs under their convent seal of record, because of mine non-payment of xxv marks, and so then the prior shall lose for ever fourscore marks (53*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) of rent, and that without any conscience, for

they have been false both to the Cliffords and to me this seven year day; and I trust to God to correct them so by spiritual law and temporal law, that all other religious shall take an example to break the covenant or will of any benefactor that advanceth them with lands, rents, or goods; and my confessors have exhorted me greatly thereto. And Almighty God keep you. Written at London the 23rd day of September, in the 30th year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight*.

London, Thursday,
23rd September, 1451, 30 H. VI.

xxv marks had been reserved was settled on the Priory of Hickling by some of the family of Clifford. William Clifford, in 1419, assigned this rent-charge to Henry Barton; who, in 1428, assigned it to Sir John Fastolf, who was now going to convey it to a Clifford again. This priory was first founded in 1185, 31 H. II., and Roger Oakham was at this time prior, a most turbulent man, of whom Sir John Fastolf, in another letter to Sir Thomas Howys, dated 28th of June, 1451, 29 H. VI. says (speaking of giving money to religious houses), "The untrouthe of the priour of Hykelyng draweth away my devotion in such causes." [Nothing was more likely to draw away Fastolf's "devotion."]

¹ Henry Lord Cromwell.

² There were several Lords Grey at this time; which of them is the person here mentioned cannot now be ascertained.

³ By J. Payn's letter (see letter xxx. p. 21) it appears that he was urged to have accused his master Sir J. Fastolf of treason.

⁴ The day of the nones.

⁵ This appears to have been written by some one whose advice had been asked in some law proceedings.

⁶ Walter Lyhart, or Hart, became Bishop of Norwich in 1446, and died in 1472.

⁷ The estate out of which this rent-charge of

There is one Walsham would desire acquittance of pardon for the widow of Heigham; I have no cause [*no reason why I should*], for her husband left her whereof to pay her debts sufficient, and for me he fares the better; the widow noiseth you, Sir Thomas, that ye sold a wey (*of*) salt but for 20s.

that she might have had 40s. for every wey; I pray you answer that for your acquittal.

Item, send me the value of Cooke's¹ tenement in Drayton with twenty acres (*of*) land thereto, what it was worth yearly, when it stood whole, for Selling saith it was worth but one noble (6s. 8d.) by the year.

LETTER XLII.—(XIV. vol. i. p. 65.)

[This is the petition of Richard Duke of York to the king in 1451, when, on his return from Ireland, he withdrew into Wales, from whence

it was forwarded. It is chiefly directed against the Duke of Somerset, but being a well-known historical document, we have omitted it here.]

LETTER XLIII.—(XXXI. vol. iii. p. 135.)

The whole of this familiar letter, wherein the writer mixes politics and pleasantry, is not entirely explicable; nor can the date be exactly ascertained: I have ventured to date it between 1450 and 1454.

To William Wayte.

RIGHT faithful and well-beloved brother William Wayte, I commend me to you, as the lord may to his tenant, praying you effectually to recommend me to my singular good master and yours, excusing me that I write not to him, for I dare not envolde (*involve*) me in the same; and as for tidings here, I certify you that all is nought or will be nought; the king borweth (*borroweth*) his expenses for Christmas; the King of Aragon, the Duke of Milan, the Duke of Ostrich [*Austria*], the Duke of Burgoyne (*Burgundy*) would have been assistant to us to make a conquest, and nothing is answered nor agreed in manner, save abiding the great deliberation that at the last shall spill [*spoil*] all together, &c.²

The chief justice³ hath waited (*expected*) to have been assaulted all this seven night nightly in his house, but nothing come as yet, the

more pity, &c. An oyer and determiner⁴ goeth into Kent, and commissioners my lord the Duke of York, Bouchier, my master, that will not come there de provisionibus, &c. but Kent prayeth them to hang no men when they come.

Other tidings as yet can I none tell you, save Ulveston is steward of the Middle Inn, and Isley of the Inner Inn, because they would have offices for excuse for dwelling this time from their wives, &c.⁵ Sir Thomas Todenham lost his primer at the Tower-hill, and sent his man to seek it, and a good fellow wished it in Norfolk, so he would fetch it there, &c. Men ween that Norfolk men were harder than they be.⁶ God grant, and at the reverence of God help too, that an outas (*outrage*) and clamour be made upon the Lord Scales, praying him for weal of the country neither sustain nor help him nor Heydon in

¹ Sir John seems to think that Selling had undervalued the tenement, and twenty acres of land; he set it only at 4d. an acre yearly rent.

² The assistance offered by the princes here named related to our wars in France.

³ John Hody was Chief Justice of the King's Bench, but I do not understand what is here related.

⁴ By what is mentioned of the commissions going into Kent to try those guilty of treasons, &c. (if these were for that purpose), it appears as if it was not a great while after Cade's rebellion; and the Duke of York being one of the commissioners, must have

been greatly in favour of the rebels, as his friends were said to have stirred up the insurrection.

⁵ [This we suppose to be a lawyer's joke. It is, however, curious to observe that the difficulties of travel, the expense, and the want of proper accommodation, prevented the families and even the wives from accompanying their husbands to London, when the business of the latter called or kept them there.]

⁶ It seems as if some robust exercises had been performed on Tower-hill wherein the Norfolk men did not exert themselves in a manner that was expected from them.

no wise, and that ye cry upon my master and yours that he obey not the certiorari as yet, as you may see by his letter from my master rudely and in haste by me endited, of which I pray excuse, &c. And pray Blake to do [cause] Swafflam men say somewhat to the matter. I weet well Todenham and Heydon will not come there at this time, as it is verily

reported, &c. "Mitte sapientem, &c." Brayn and I shall be with you on Saturday next at even with the grace of Jesu, to whom I be- take you. In haste at London the 2nd day of January.

By J. BOCKING.¹

London, 2 Jan.
between 1450 & 1454.
29 & 34 H. VI.

LETTER XLIV.—(XXXII. vol. iii. p. 139.)

I have given this letter to show the fairness and moderation of a nobleman, in an age when the great men used to tyrannise almost with uncontrolled power over their inferiors. It does the Earl credit as a man, and makes us lament his untimely death, being brought to the block in 1461 for his loyalty to his unfortunate sovereign. [It certainly does not evince any desire to use undue influence, but it displays little of the possession of the "almost uncontrolled power" attributed to him by Fenn.]

To my right trusty and right well-beloved John Paston.

RIGHT trusty and right well-beloved, I greet you well, and I am informed that William Mathew of Norwich, butcher, hath brought an action of debt against Nicholas Hart, a tenant of mine, bearer hereof, and hath supposed by his action that my said tenant should owe him seventy shillings for his hire of time that he should have been servant to my said tenant; where (*as*) it is said to me for truth that he was apprentice to my said tenant, and never otherwise withheld but as apprentice, and oweth no money to have of him. I send to you my said tenant to give you clear in-

formation of the matter, and I pray you that ye will call the jury before you that are im- pannelled between them, and open (*to*) them the matter at large at mine instance, and de- sire them to do as conscience will, and to eschew perjury; and the Trinity keep you. If ye take the matter in rule, I pray thereof, and will be content. Written at Wivenhoe the 28th day of December.

THE EARL OF OXFORD.

Wivenhoe in Essex, 28 Dec.
most probably written
between 1450 & 1455.
29 & 34 H. VI.

LETTER XLV.—(XXXIII. vol. iii. p. 141.)

It appears from this letter that small houses were sometimes framed and made ready on the spot where the wood was felled; some dispute seems to have arisen here, and the owner or occupier of the wood refused his consent to the carrying away of the timber-work after it had been made ready to set up.

To my well-beloved brother, John Paston, Esq.

BROTHER Paston, I recommend me unto you, praying you that ye take the labour to speak with Thomas Ratchiff of Framsdén (*in Suffolk*) for the deliverance of part of an house which lyeth in his wood at Framsdén, which house the owner hath carried part thereof to Orford, which, so departed, the remanent, that remain- eth there in his wood, shall do him little good, and it shall hurt greatly the workmen and the owner thereof also, which is my tenant, and the house should be set upon ground.

I write unto you in this behalf, because I understand he will be much advised by you, and if he do anything at my request I shall do as much that shall please him; and also the poor man shall give him two nobles, or twenty shillings rather than fail; I pray you be as good a mean for him as ye may in this behalf as my very trust is in you, and I shall

¹ J. Bocking was one in the household of Sir John Fastolf.

be ready at all times to do that may be to your pleasure, I trust to Jesu, who have you in his keeping, and send you joy of all your ladies.¹

Tuesday, May or June,
between 1450 and 1460.
28 & 38 H. VI.

Written at Letheringham, this Tuesday in Whitsun week.

Your brother and friend,
J. WYNGFIELD.²

LETTER XLVI.—(XXXIV. vol. iii. p. 145.)

I have given this letter as showing the method of educating young women of some family, but of small fortune, by placing them in the families of the gentry, &c. It is plain, from Sir John's desiring that Margaret Paston would take her for a time as a boarder, that the young person was not to have been in the line of a common servant. He likewise shows a propriety of conduct in not taking her himself, as he was a widower; at the same time acknowledging that, had he had a wife, he should have found no difficulty in providing properly for her in his own family. Sir John Heveningham married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Reddisham, knight, and he was living in 1459.

To my right worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you as heartily as I can, thanking you of your good cheer the last time I was with you. And, worshipful cousin, please it you to call unto your remembrance, I wrote unto you for my cousin Auneys Loveday to have been in your service, and I received from you a letter that your will was good, but durst not to into the time ye had spoke with my cousin your husband.

Worshipful cousin, I have laboured for her in other places, but I cannot have mine intent as yet, wherefore if that it please you to have her with you into the time that a mistress may be purveyed for her, I pray you thereof,

Heveningham, 7th May,
between 1450 and 1460.
28 and 38 H. VI.

and I shall content you for her board that ye shall be well pleased; for, cousin, and (if) I had a wife, I would not care [*be uneasy*] for her; and there as she is she is not well at her ease, for she is at Robert Lethum's, and therefore I pray you heartily that ye will tender this my writing, and I beseech you that in case be that ye will fulfil it, that ye will send my cousin William Staunton for her, and I shall keep you true promise as I have before written; and I beseech Almighty Jesu preserve you. Written at Heveningham on the 7th day of May, &c.,

Your own cousin,

JOHN HEVENINGHAM, Knight.

¹ What is meant by this expression, "sende yo' joy of all yo' ladies," I do not understand, unless it should have been meant to signify, send you all the joys of our Lady. [There is little doubt that it means the ladies of his family. Letter xxxix. mentions a daughter as unwell.]

² Sir John Wyngfield, the writer of this letter, was

a knight of that very ancient family of Wingfield Castle, in Suffolk. He was now seated at Letheringham, and, I believe, married Margaret daughter of Sir Hugh Hastings, of Elsing in Norfolk. His signature is very particular, the initial J of his Christian name being placed at the end of his surname.

LETTER XLVII.—(XXXV. vol. iii. p. 147.)

The writer of this letter might be sister (or daughter) of John Crane, the gentleman whose signature is to *Letter xxviii.*, p. 20. The date must remain quite uncertain between the years 1450 and 1460, which indeed is totally immaterial, as the letter is given merely to show that young women of good families were brought up as attendants upon ladies of rank, and served them, not only in the capacity of the modern "lady's woman," but were taught all kinds of needleworks, pastry, cookery, &c., thus qualifying them to become good mothers, frugal housewives, and useful members of the community.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare; and if it like you to hear of my welfare, at the making of this letter I was in good hele, loved be God. The cause of my writing to you at this time is this, praying you to send me word of your welfare, and how ye do of your sickness, and if the medicine do you any good that I sent you writing of last; thanking you of the great friendship that ye have done to my mother with all my heart.

Also I pray you that ye will be good mean to my cousin your husband, that he will see that my father be well ruled in his livelihood for his worship and his profit.

Also praying you to hold me excused that I have written no oftener to you, for, in good faith, I had no leisure, for my lady hath been sick at London near hand this quarter of this year, and that hath been great heaviness to

me; but now, blessed be God, she is amended, and is in the country again.

Also thanking you of the great cheer that I had of you when I was with you last with all my heart, praying you of good continuance, for I had never greater need than I have now, and if I had leisure and space I would write to you the cause.

No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Windsor, the 29th day of June.

Also, cousin, I pray you to send me some Norfolk thread to do about my neck,¹ to ride with.

By your poor beadswoman and cousin,

ALICE CRANE.

Windsor, 29th
June, between
1450 and 1460.
29 and 39 H. VI.

John Crane,

LETTER XLVIII.—(XXXVI. vol. iii. p. 151.)

We see here a terrible instance of the ungovernable spirit of a multitude raised against the chief officer of the county for a supposed offence, for it does not appear that the sheriff had secreted or delayed the writ; if he had done so, it is a treatment he might have expected in such unsettled and sanguinary times. Even in this modern age of refinement, we see election disputes conducted with an animosity, by the friends of the different candidates, which in their cool and dispassionate moments they are themselves shocked at and ashamed of. [Sir John is rather too earnest about an election row. The delay of a writ of election is not a trifle, and the sheriff's answer, he "wist not who had it," rather implies that some one had it; nevertheless the tumult went not beyond noise, the house is not forced, and nothing "sanguinary" appears to have happened. The contemplated deputation to the king, of "an hundred or two hundred of the thriftiest men," was, probably, on the part of the corporation, to absolve themselves from any fault in this insult to the sheriff.]

To my right reverend and most worshipful master, my master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and my most reverend master, I recommend me unto your good mastership; like you to weet that on Childermas day² there were much people at Norwich at the shire (*the county court*), because it was noised in the shire that the

under-sheriff had a writ to make a new election, wherefore the people was grieved because they had laboured so often, saying to the sheriff that he had the writ, and plainly he should not away unto the time the writ were read. The sheriff answered and said

¹ Something like a modern tippet seems meant, to be put about her neck as part of her riding-dress.

² Childermas day is the 28th of December, and the day of the week on which it fell was reckoned an

unfortunate day throughout the following year to begin any undertaking, &c. The same superstition at this time reigns in many places, and amongst many persons even above the vulgar.

that he had no writ, nor wist who had it: hereupon the people peaced (*became peaceable*), and stilled unto the time the shire was done, and after that done, the people called upon him, "kill him, head him," and so John Damme, with help of others, gat him out of the shire-house, and with much labour brought him into Spurrier Row,¹ and there the people met against him, and so they avoided [*withdrew*] him into an house, and kept fast the door unto the time the mayor was sent for, and the sheriff,² to strengthen him, and to convey him away, or else he had been slain; wherefore divers of the thrifty men came to me, desiring that I should write unto your mastership to let you have understanding of the guiding of the people, for they be full sorry of this trouble; and that it please you to send them your advice how they shall be guided and ruled, for they were purposed to have gathered an hundred or two hundred of the thriftiest men, and to have come up to the king to let the king have understanding of their mocking.

And also the people fear them sore of you, and of Master Berney, because ye come not home.

Please you that ye remember the bill I sent you at Hallowmas for the place and lands at Beighton which Cheeseman had in his farm for five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*); there will no man have it above forty-six shillings and eight pence, for Alblaster and I have done as much thereto as we can, but we cannot go above that, and yet we cannot let it so for this year without they have it for five or six years;³ I wrote to your mastership hereof but I had none answer, wherefore I beseech you that I may have answer of this by twelfth (*6 January*) for and (*if*) we have an answer of this by that time we shall enfeoffe him with all, &c.

My right worshipful and my most reverend master, Almighty Jesu preserve you and send you the victory of your enemies, as I trust to Almighty Jesu ye shall.

Written at Norwich on St. Thomas's Day after Christmas Day.

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.⁴

Norwich,
St. Thomas Becket,
29th Dec. between 1450 and 1460.
29 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XLIX.—(XXXVII. vol. iii. p. 155.)

This letter, from a favourer of the Duke of York's interest, must have been written between the years 1451 and 1456, at such time as the king was under the direction and guidance of the Yorkists, as it affords us a variety of directions relative to their proceedings, and for their acquiring friends in the House of Commons. Sir William Oldhall was Speaker of that House in 1451 and 1452, but it does not appear that he was so at the time this letter was written, though, from his being so particularly mentioned, if not Speaker, he was certainly a man of weight and consequence there. J. Paston also seems to have been a man of much consideration and interest in the county of Norfolk, from the requests here made to him, and the instructions given him. [The directions here given for getting up a political "agitation," and for conducting an election, are amusing from their resemblance to more modern efforts for similar ends; and instructive, as showing the weight and importance which even thus early was due to the expression of public opinion. The letter is no doubt from a strong political partisan, and the opinions of, and expressions applied to, his opponents (for instance, that Lord Molyn's adherents are beasts) exaggerated, yet from previous letters, where we see complaints of Heydon, Todenham, &c., it is clear that the "agitation," though perhaps unduly excited, was not unfounded.]

To my master, John Paston, in right great haste.

SIR, and it please, I was in my Lord of York's house, and I heard much thing more

than my master writeth unto you of; I heard much thing in Fleet-street; but, Sir, my

¹ Spurrier Row was what is now called the White Lyon Lane, and leads from the castle ditches to the market-place: it took its name from the shops of those who sold saddles, bridles, spurs, &c. &c.

² [It was the under-sheriff who was attacked, although he is here sometimes styled the sheriff.]

³ It appears by this that the rents of lands were at this time declining, owing most probably to the un-

settled state of the nation. [Farmers were then evidently aware of the value of a fixed term, and, though rents were declining, would not take a farm at a reduced rent, except under a lease for five or six years.]

⁴ [He afterwards married Margery, the daughter of J. Paston. The date of this letter is uncertain, but most probably towards the latter part of the reign of Henry VI.]

lord was with the king, and he visaged so the matter that all the king's household was, and is, afraid right sore; and my said lord bath put a bill to the king, and desired much thing which is much after the commons' desire, and all is upon justice, and to put all those that be indicted under arrest, without surety or mainprise, and to be tried by law as law will, insomuch that on Monday Sir William Oldhall was with the king at Westminster more than two hours, and had of the king good cheer; and the king desired of Sir William Oldhall that he should speak to his cousin York that he would be good lord to John Penycok, and that my Lord of York should write unto his tenants that they should suffer Penycok's officers (*to*) go and gather up his rent-farms within the said Duke's lordships; and Sir William Oldhall answered again to the king, and prayed him to hold my lord excused, for though my lord wrote under his seal of his arms, his tenants will not obey it, insomuch (*that*) when Sir Thomas Hoe met with my Lord of York beyond Saint Alban's the western men fell upon him and would have slain him, had (*not*) Sir William Oldhall abeen [*been there*], and therefore would the western men have fallen upon the said Sir William and have killed him, and so he told the king.

Sir Borle Yonge and Josse labour sore for Heydon and Todenham to Sir William Oldhall, and proffer more than two thousand pounds for to have his good lordship, and therefore it is none other remedy but let Swaffham men be warned to meet with my said lord on Friday next coming at Pickenham on horseback in the most goodly wise, and put some bill unto my lord of Sir Thomas Todenham, Heydon, and Prentice, and cry out on them, and that all the women of the same town be there also, and cry out on them also, and call them extortioners, and pray my lord that he will do sharp execution upon them. And my master counsels you that ye should move the mayor and all the aldermen with all their commoners to ride against (*to meet*)¹ my lord, and that there be made bills, and put them up to my lord,

and let all the town cry out on Heydon, Todenham, Wyndham, and Prentice, and of all their false maintainers, and tell my lord how much hurt they have done to the city, and let it be done in the most lamentable wise, for, Sir, but if (*unless*) my lord hear some foul tales of them, and some hideous noise and cry, by my faith they are else like to come to grace, and therefore, Sir, remember you of all these matters.

Sir, also I spake with William Norwich, and asked him after the Lord Molyns how he stood to my lord ward, and he told me he was sore out of grace, and that my Lord of York loveth him nought; William Norwich told me that he durst undertake for to bring you unto my lord, and make him your right good lord; and, Sir, my master counselled you that ye should not spare, but get you his good lordship.

Sir, beware of Heydon, for he would (*have*) destroyed you by my faith.

The Lord Scales and Sir William Oldhall are made friends.

Sir, labour ye for (*to*) be knight of the shire, and speak to my master Stapleton also that he be it; Sir, all Swaffham, and (*if*) they be warned, will give you their voices; Sir, speak with Thomas Denys and take his good advice therein; Sir, speak to Denys that he avoid [*withdraw*] his garrison at Reydon, for there is none other remedy but death for Daniel, and for all those that are indicted; Sir, labour ye to the mayor that John Dam² or William Jenney be burgess for the city of Norwich, tell them that he may be it as well as Yonge is of Bristol, or the Recorder is of London, and as the Recorder of Coventry is for the city of Coventry; and it (*is*) so in many places in England. Also, Sir, think on Yarmouth that ye ordain that John Jenney, or Lomnor, or some good man be burgess for Yarmouth; ordain ye that Jenneys may be in the parliament for they can say well.

Sir, it were wisdom that my Lord of Oxford wait on my Lord of York; in good faith, good Sir, think on all these matters; much more I had to write unto you if I

¹ [More correctly *towards*.]

² [The name of this Norfolk family is generally

spelt Damme; but the orthography of names was at this time, and indeed long after, very unsettled.]

could have remembered me, but I had no leisure by my faith; hold me excused of my lewd rude writing; let John Dam beware for the Lord Molyns; and, Sir, let the city beware for he will do them a villainy but if (*unless*) he may have his men; and, Sir, if he come to Norwich, look there be ready to wait upon the mayor a good fellowship, for it is said here that they are but beasts.

Sir, my master bade me write unto you that ye should stir the mayor and all the aldermen to cry on my lord that they may have justice of these men that be indicted, and that my lord will speak unto the king thereof; and, Sir, in divers parts in the

town there (*where*) my lord cometh, there would be ordained many portions (*parties*) of commoners to cry on my lord for justice of these men that are indicted, and tell their names, in special Todenham, Heydon, Wyndham, (*and*) Prentice. Sir, I send you a copy of the bill that my Lord of York put unto the king; and, Sir, let copies go about the city enough, for the love of God, which have you in his keeping. Written on Saint Faith's day in haste.

By your servant, WILLIAM WAYTE.

6th of October,
between 1451 and 1456.
30 and 35 H. VI.

LETTER L.—(XXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 163.)

On the back of this letter is written, "It appereth by this lre that Sir Jo. Fastolf was of kynred to John Paston sr." The date of this letter cannot be ascertained farther than that it was written between 1444, when Sir William Paston died, and 1459, the year in which Sir John Fastolf deceased. It contains nothing material, but I think it throws light upon the character of Agnes Paston, showing her in the light of one who was ever attentive to her family and her fortunes, and interested herself in having a proper provision made for her younger children. We shall see that the Duke of Norfolk afterwards claimed Caister, and laid a regular siege to it. The Lady Boys mentioned in this letter was Sibilla, widow of Sir Roger Boys, of Honing; she was living in 1450.

This letter be delivered to John Paston, being at London, in the Inner Inn of the Temple.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; and as touching the matter which ye desired my cousin Clere should write for, she hath done, and I send you the copy closed in this letter. As for the inquiry, I have sent by Pynchmore to inquire, and sent mine own man to William Bacton, and done him inquire in divers places, and I can hear no word of none such inquirance, I wot not what it meaneth. Robert Hill was at Paston this week, and the man that dwelled in Bowers Place is out thereof, and said to Robert he durst no longer abide therein, for Waryn Herman sayeth to him it is his place. As for Coket's matter, my daughter your wife told me yester even the man that sueth him will now stand to your award.

Bartholomew White is condemned in Fornet court in 40 marks (26l. 13s. 4d.) as it is said.

Item, as for Talfas, the sheriffs have bested to do all the favour they may; I sent the parson of St. Edmund's to Gilbert, and he said there was come a new writ for to

have him up by the 15th day of Saint Martin, and how Caly had been at them,¹ and desired to carry up Talfas on his own cost, and give him good wages.

Item, John Osbern said to me this day that he supposed they will not have him up before Easter, and Margaret Talfas said to me the same day, that men told her that he should never have end till he were at London, and asked me counsel whether she might give the sheriff's silver or none; and I told her if she did, I supposed she should find them the more friendly.

Item, as for Orwellbury, I send you a bill of all the receipts since the death of your father, and a copy written on the back how your father let it to farm to the said Gurney; I would ye should write (*to*) Gurney, and charge him to meet with you from Londonward, and at the least way let him purvey ten pounds, for (*he*) oweth by my reckoning at Michaelmas last past, beside your father's

¹ [Fenn translates *this home*.]

debt, 18*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*; if ye would write to him to bring surety both for your father's debt and mine, and pay by days,¹ so that the man might live and pay us, I would forgive him of the old arrearages ten pounds; and (*if*) he might be made to pay 20 marks, (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year, on that condition I would forgive him ten pounds,² and so thinketh me he should have cause to pray for your father and me, and was it let [*and that it was let*] in my father's time. I feel by Robert, his wife is right loth to go thence, she said that she had lever (*rather*) I should have all her goods after her day than they should go out thereof.

Item, John Dam told me that the Lady Boys will sell a place called Hales, but he saith she speaketh it privily and saith it is not tayed (*entailed*), as John Dam knoweth, which will she hath said as largely of other things that hath not been so.

Item, he told me as he heard said, Sir John Fastolf hath sold Helleston to Boleyn of London, and if it be so it seemeth he will sell more, wherefore I pray you, as ye will have my love and my blessing, that ye will help

and do your devoir that some thing were purchased for your two brethren; I suppose that Sir John Fastolf, and (*if*) he were spoke to, would be gladder to let his kinsmen have part than strange men; assay him in my name of such places as ye suppose is most clear.

It is said in this country that my Lord of Norfolk saith Sir John Fastolf hath given him Caister, and he will have (*it*) plainly. I send you a bill of Osborn's hand, which was the answer of the sheriff and John of Dam.

John, bring me my letter home with you, and my cousin Clere's copy of her letter, and the copy of the receipt of Orwellbury, and recommend me to Lomner, and tell him his best beloved fareth well, but she is not yet come to Norwich, for they die yet, but not so sore as they did, and God be with you.³ Written at Norwich, in right great haste, the 16th day of November.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, 16th of November,
between 1444 and 1459.
23 and 38 H. VI.

LETTER LI.—(XV. vol. i. p. 69.)

Margaret of Anjou, Queen of Henry VI. alarmed at the report of the approach of Edward Earl of March (son to the Duke of York) towards London with a great power, endeavoured to make what friends she could; and amongst other places, on her journey for that purpose, visited Norwich; Edmund de Hadham, and Jasper of Hatfield, the king's half-brothers, attending her. Her familiarity and obliging address pleased the gentry, and shows that she understood the art of conciliating the goodwill of those with whom she conversed.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet, &c. (*here follow some account of money received, &c.*)

As for tidings, the queen came into this town on Tuesday⁴ last past after noon, and abode here till it was Thursday three (*o'clock*) afternoon; and she sent after my cousin Elizabeth Clere⁵ by Sharinborn to come to her; and she durst not disobey her commandment, and came to her; and when she came in the queen's presence, the queen made right much of her, and desired her to

have an husband, the which ye shall know of hereafter; but as for that he is never nearer than he was before; the queen was right well pleased with her answer, and reporteth of her in the best wise, and saith, by her truth, she saw no gentlewoman since she came into Norfolk that she liked better than she doth her.

Blake, the bailey of Swaffham, was here with the king's brother,⁶ and he came to me, weening that ye had been at home; and said that the king's brother desired him that he should pray you in his name to come to him,

¹ [Fixed terms.]

² [That is, other ten pounds of her own debt.]

³ [This must refer to some pestilence or epidemic disease, but we find no other mention of it. Probably some local fever.]

⁴ Tuesday, 18th of April. Thursday 20th of April.

⁵ Daughter of Robert Clere, Esq., of Ormesby.

⁶ Either Edmund, afterwards Earl of Richmond, father to Henry VII., or Jasper, Earl of Pembroke.

for he would right fain that ye had come to him if ye had been at home; and he told me that he wist well that he should send for you when he came to London, both for Cossey and other things.

I pray you that ye will do your cost on me against Whitsuntide, that I may have something for my neck. When the queen was here, I borrowed my cousin Elizabeth Clere's device,¹ for I durst not for shame go with my

beads² amongst so many fresh³ gentlewomen as here were at that time.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on the Friday next before St. George.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday.

21st of April, 1452. 30 H. VI.

LETTER LII.—(XXXIX. vol. iii. p. 169.)

I have copied this letter as containing a recipe against bad air; but whether or not cardamoms are meant I cannot tell, they are said to be warm and attenuating, and to comfort the head and stomach, and, therefore, I should suppose, proper to be taken in a morning as a preservative against the effects of bad air. The fair leaves of artichokes, when blanched and rendered less bitter, are likewise called chards; these as being flat, might be kept in a book, and in that state brought from foreign parts ready for use, as we had no artichokes till long after this time in England. These were accounted very wholesome; it is probable, therefore, that these are the things mentioned. [The complaint of the air of Norwich is also something remarkable, but probably means no more than the effect of a crowded city upon a person accustomed to the open air of the country. It is also a curious fact that two dozen wooden trenchers could not be procured in so large and commercial a town, but had to be sent for from London.] Margaret Paston's uncle, Philip Berney, died in 1453, therefore this letter must be written about that time.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I commend me to you, I pray you that ye will do buy two dozen trenchers, for I can none get in this town; also I pray you that ye will send me a book with chardeqweyns that I may have of in the morning, for the air be not wholesome in this town, therefore I pray you heartily let John Suffield bring it home with him.

No more, but the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written on St. Leonard's even.

My uncle Philip commends him to you, and he hath been so sick since that I came to Reedham, that I wend [*weened—thought*] he should never have escaped it, nor not⁴ is like

to do but if (*unless*) he have ready help, and therefore he shall into Suffolk this next week, to mine aunt, for there is a good physician, and he shall look to him.

My Lady Hastyns told me that Heydon hath spoken to Jeffrey Boleyn of London, and is agreed with him that he should bargain with Sir John Fastolf to buy the manor if Blickling as it were for himself, and if Boleyn buy it in truth Heydon shall have it.

I came to Norwich on Soulmass day (*2nd of November*).

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Sunday, 5th of November,
1452. 32 H. VI.

¹ A device, or ornament for the neck.

² Necklaces of beads, &c., appear to have been worn at this time, though she either did not think her's handsome or fashionable enough to be put on upon this occasion.

³ May not the word *fresch* mean French or foreign gentlewomen attendant on the queen? though it

most probably means fresh, gay, or well-dressed or fashionable ladies. [We do not see why so far-fetched a meaning should be sought,—fresh is new, and among so many new acquaintance, she was ashamed to appear without fitting dress and ornaments.]

⁴ [That is—nor is not like, &c.]

LETTER LIH.—(XL. vol. iii. p. 171.)

The conversation in this letter must refer to some offer of marriage made to his sister Elizabeth Paston, who afterwards married Robert Poynings; and I should suppose the letter to have been written in January 1452-3, from the request in it for him to buy his wife some ornament for her neck, as the same petition had been made in a previous letter (li.), which was dated April, 1452, and probably not yet complied with.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that I spake yesterday with my sister, and she told me that she was sorry that she might not speak with you ere ye yede (*went*); and she desireth, if it pleased you, that ye should give the gentleman that ye know of such language as he might feel by you that ye will be well willing to the matter that ye know of; for she told me that he hath said before this time that he conceived that ye have set but little thereby; wherefore she prayeth you that ye will be her good brother, and that ye might have a full answer at this time whether it shall be yea or nay; for her mother hath said to her syth (*since*) that ye riddeu hence, that she hath no fantasy [*belief*] therein, but that it shall come to a jape (*come to nothing*); and saith to her that there is good craft in daubing; and hath such language to her that she thinketh right strange, and so that she is right weary thereof; wherefore she desireth the rather to have a full conclusion therein. She saith her full trust is in you,

and as ye do therein she will agree her thereto.

Master Brackley was here yesterday to have spoken with you; I spake with him, but he would not tell me what his errand was.

It is said here that the sessions shall be at Thetford on Saturday next coming, and there shall be my Lord of Norfolk and others with great people, as it is said. Other tidings have we none yet.

The blissful Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich on the Tuesday next before Candlemass.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to remember to purvey a thing for my neck, and to do make (*have made*) my girdle.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

My cousin Crane recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to remember her matter, &c., for she may not sleep on nights for him.²

Norwich, Tuesday, 30th of January,
1452-3. 31 H. VI.

LETTER LIV.—(XLI. vol. iii. p. 175.)

I have given this curious letter as a specimen of the outrages committed by the great upon respectable gentlemen; for though the writer has put no name to his letter, he appears to have been a man of property, and of some consequence, and most probably had married an heiress of fortune, as he mentions his wife's place in Norwich. There being an act of parliament passed, shows that he was a man of some consideration. At this time the most arbitrary methods were used to obtain the possession of estates, and entries were made in the most forcible manner; though perhaps in this case there might be some proper reasons for these proceedings under the direction of the Cardinal and Lord Oxford. His wife's daughter was also most probably an heiress, of whom Ingham had obtained the wardship, by which means he would demand a sum of money on her marriage. The Inghams were a most ancient and knightly family, situated at Ingham, in Norfolk, of which the male line in the capital branch had failed in 1344; this person was therefore some collateral issue. The cardinal here mentioned must have been John Kemp, first Bishop of Rochester, next of Chichester, then of London, from which see he was removed to York, and in 1452 became Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1439 he was made Cardinal of St. Balbine, and a short time before his death was removed to the cardinalship of St. Rufine: these various preferments were briefly recorded in the following line:—

“Bis Primas, ter Præses, et bis Cardine functus.”

¹ John Bracklee or Brackley, was a brother of the Convent of Grey Friars, or Friars Minors, in Norwich; he took a Doctor of Divinity's degree, and was a famous preacher.

² Who the gentleman was, or what the important

matter could be, which prevented her cousin Crane from sleeping, must be left in doubt, unless some of my fair readers, who shall do me the honour to peruse these letters, may have penetration enough to discover either the one or the other.

He died very old, and very rich, in the beginning of the year 1453, and was buried in his own cathedral. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was beheaded in 1461, 1 E. IV. The conclusion of this letter conveys an insinuation that the king was improperly fettered by the ruling of this archbishop. [Notwithstanding all Sir John's assertions about "outrages," and "arbitrary" methods, there appears nothing in this letter but what might be related now by a chancery suitor. Of the justice or injustice of the case we of course know nothing; but the arresting of a surety for a debt, which had been paid by the principal, might have happened till the recent abrogation of arrest upon *mesne process*; and the committal of a lady to the Fleet for contempt is no uncommon Chancery process: in this case also the warden of the Fleet is stated to have conducted himself with humanity and proper feeling.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and mine especial good master, I recommend me to you with all service and prayer to my power, and like it you to weet that how he! a full strange act is passed against me in the Higher House before the Lords, whereof I send you a copy; nevertheless I hope to God that it shall not pass in the Common House; but me is befallen the most sorrowful infortune that ever poor man had, standing in such case as I do; for my lords the cardinal and of Oxford have imprisoned my wife in the Counter, and how they shall guide her forth God knoweth, which standeth too nigh mine heart, if God's will were, but well I know that by these vengeable malices done to her and me they will (*not q?*) be content, for Ingham lithe (*lieth*) beside that to take away my wife's daughter out of Westminster, to make an end of my wife if he can, and also to arrest my servants, that I dread that she nor I shall have no creature to attend us nor help us; and such malice have I never heard of heretofore; and it is told me that, beside that, they will despoil, if any good they can find of mine, in Norwich or Norfolk, and imprison my servants there; wherefore I lowly beseech your mastership for our Lord's mercy that ye vouchsafe to succour them in this necessity; and, if any entry be made or should be made upon my wife's place in Norwich, that ye vouchsafe to succour my servants, and do therein after your wisdom for Christ's love and Saint Charity.

Beside this, a friend and kinsman of mine, one Robert Clement of Beetley, hath written to me that he is arrested and like to be im-

prisoned by a writ of debt, taken against him upon an obligation of an hundred pounds, in which he and I and others were bound to my Lord of Oxford fourteen years ago, whereof I have many acquittances. Wherefore I pray your good mastership to send to the sheriff that my said kinsman may be eased, and no return made against him, but that he may answer the next time by attorney, for truly that writ was taken out in the end of the term after I was arrested, and after it was appeared to.

I pray your mastership for God's sake to be not displeased nor weary to do for me in these matters of your charity, for I had lever (*rather*) give the said Robert such good, little if it be, as I have, than he were undone for me, or any man else that ever did for me; and I hope if God vouchsafe that the matter may come to reason, to save him harmless, and all other with God's mercy, ever praying you of your mastership and succour for God's love, who ever keep you for his mercy.

Written in Fleet, the Wednesday the second week of Lent. Moreover in augmenting of my sorrow, I weened my wife should have died since, for after she was arrested she laboured of her child that she is withal, waiting either to die or be delivered, and she hath not gone eight weeks quick; what shall befall Almighty God knoweth, and shall dispose mercifully.

Afterward my wife was some deal (*some-what*) eased by the labour of the warden of Fleet, for the cursed cardinal had sent her to Newgate, God forgive his soul! now she is taken to bail till Tuesday. The cardinal is dead, and the king is relieved.

The Fleet, Wednesday,
21st of February, 1452-3.
31 H. VI.

¹ [*How be*—that is however it be—from whatever cause it may be. The style of this letter is frequently obscure. A few lines farther on we have, "but me is befallen"—i. e. but to me.]

LETTER LV.—(XVI. vol. i. p. 73.)

This letter is given, not only as containing some state anecdotes, but as exhibiting a character of John Paston, Esq. from Thomas Billings, who in 1453 was created a Serjeant at Law, and in 1458 appointed King's Serjeant. He became Chief Justice of England, in 1472.

To his worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend (*me*) to you; and as fortidings, my Lord of York¹ hath taken my Lord of Exeter² into his award; the Duke of Somerset³ is still in prison, in worse case than he was.

Sir John Fastolf recommends him to you, &c., he will ride into Norfolk ward as on Thursday, and he will dwell at Caister, and Scroop with him: he saith ye are the heartiest kinsman and friend that he knoweth, he would have you at Mauteby dwelling.

I had great cheer of Billings by the way, and he told me, in counsel, what he said to Ledam.

Ledam would have done his wise (*endeavour*) to have made a complaint to Prytoke in the shire house of you, and Billings counselled him to leave, and told Ledam, ye and he were no fellows, and said to Ledam "it is the guise of your countrymen to spend all the goods they have on men and livery gowns, and horse and harness, and so bear it out for a while, and

at the last they are but beggars; and so will ye do: I would ye should do well, because ye are a fellow of Gray's Inn, where I was a fellow.

"As for Paston, he is an esquire of worship, and of great livelyhood, and I wot he will not spend all his goods at once, but he spareth yearly an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or an hundred pounds: he may do his enemy a shrewd turn and never fare the worse in his household, nor (*have*) the less men about him.

"Ye may not do so, but if it be for one season, I counsel you not to continue long as ye do. I would counsel you to seek rest with Paston."

And I thanked Billings on your behalf. God have you in his keeping.

By your poor brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.⁴

Much other thing I can tell you, and I had leisure; recommend me to my sister Margaret, and my cousin Elizabeth Clere, I pray you.



1452, or 1453,
31 or 32 H. VI.

By thy am paston

LETTER LVI.—(XLII. vol. iii. p. 179.)

On the margin of this letter, towards the bottom, in a hand nearly coeval with the letter itself, is written "M^d. q^d. dict. Irē dnor' direct. Archiepō Cant. est ap^d."—The paper is then unfortunately torn off, so that what followed is missing. Enough, however, remains to inform us that the letter to the archbishop was from the lords—that is, I presume, from the Duke of York and the lords in his party; and was, I suppose, a counterpart of what is contained in this letter, which appears to have been a copy of that sent to the king, and sent by some friend of J. Paston's to him, and which, by the words of the direction "Vadatur J. P." seems to have been sent to him under a solemn promise to be delivered. As several petitions and remonstrances were sent from the Duke of York and his party during these civil contests to the king, the exact date of this cannot be ascertained, though it was probably during the chancellorship of John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, between the years 1452 and 1454. The address of this letter beginning with "Moste Cristen Kyng" is very particular; nor do I remember ever before to have seen the words "Magestee Royall," so early used in an address to the sovereign; it is well drawn up, and the purport of it is loyal and manly; it seems too to have been sent at a time when they supposed themselves sure of assistance, if we advert to the

¹ Richard Duke of York.

² Henry Holland Duke of Exeter.

³ Edmund Beaufort Duke of Somerset, was im-

prisoned by the Duke of York's party in 1452, and again, for a considerable time, in 1453.

⁴ A younger son of Sir William Paston.

steadiness of the concluding words :—" Whereynne we wolle persever wyth the gr'ce of our lorde." By sending a duplicate to the king they seemed to doubt whether or no the Archbishop would inform his highness of their letter addressed to him as Lord Chancellor.

Fadatur, J. P.

Most Christian king, right high and mighty prince, and our most redoubted sovereign lord, we recommend us as humbly as we suffice unto your high excellence, whereunto please it to weet that for so much as we hear and understand, to our greatest sorrow earthly, that our enemies of approved experience, such as abide and keep themselves under the wing of your majesty royal, have thrown unto the same right studiously and right fraudulently many ambiguities and doubts of the faith-legiance, and duty, that, God knoweth, we bear unto your highness, and have put them in as great devoir as they could to enstrange us from your most noble presence, and from the favour of your good grace; which good grace to us is, and ought to be, our singular and most desired joy and consolation. We at this time be coming with grace, as your true and humble liege men, toward your said high excellence, to declare, and show thereto at large, our said faith and legiance, intending, with the mercy of Jesu in the said coming, to put us in as diligent and hearty devoir and duty as any your liege men alive to that at [that]¹ may avance (*advance*) or prefer the honour and welfare of the said majesty royal

and the surety of the said most notable person, the which (*we*) beseech our blessed Creator to prosper (*with*) as great honour, joy, and felicity as ever had any prince earthly, and to your said highness so to take, accept, and repute us, and not to please to give trust or confidence unto the sinister, malicious, and fraudulent labours and reports of our said enemies unto our coming to your said most noble presence, whereunto we beseech humbly that we may be admitted as your liege men, to the intent to show us the same, whereof yesterday we wrote our letters of our intent, to the right reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, your Chancellor of England, to be showed to your said highness, whereof for so much as we be not ascertained whether our said intent be by his fatherhood showed unto your said good grace or not, we send thereof unto this closed [*under this enclosed*] a copy of our said letters of our disposition towards your said high excellence, and the honour and weal of the land, wherein we will persevere with the grace of our lord.

Most probably written
between 1452 and 1454.
30 and 33 H. VI.

LETTER LVII.—(XLIII. vol. iii. p. 183.)

This letter may be called a modern obituary, as it informs us of the death, and likewise of the manner of the death, of two gentlemen of consequence in the county of Norfolk.

To my well-beloved son, John Paston.

Son I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, and let you weet that Robert Hill came homeward by Orwellbury, and Gurney told him he had been at London for money and could not speeden, and behested [*promised*] Robert that he should send me money by you; I pray forget it not as ye come home-

ward, and speak sadly (*seriously*) for another farmer.

And as for tydings, Philip Berney² is passed to God on Monday last past with the greatest pain that ever I saw man; and on Tuesday Sir John Heveningham³ yede (*went*) to his church and heard three masses, and

¹ [Fenn translates *which*; this is more grammatical, but is not the word intended.]

² Philip Berney, of Caston, Esq. was third son of John Berney, Esq. of Reedham, by Isabel, daughter of Sir John Heveningham, knight.

³ Sir John Heveningham, knight, was lineally descended from Walter Heveningham, who resided at

Heveningham in Suffolk so early as in the time of King Canute, 1017—1036. Thomas, the grandson of Sir John settled at Ketteringham in Norfolk, whose descendant, William Heveningham of the same place, was one of the judges of the High Court of Justice who tried their sovereign King Charles I. This branch of this ancient family ended in his son.

came home again never merrier, and said to his wife that he would go say a little devotion in his garden, and then he would dine;¹ and forthwith he felt a fainting in his leg, and sydd (*sit*²) down; this was at nine of the clock, and he was dead ere noon.

My cousin Clere prays you that ye let no man see her letter, which is ensealed under my seal. I pray you that you will pay your brother William for four ounces and an half of silk as he paid, which he sent me by Wil-

liam Taverner, and bring with you a quarter of an ounce even like of the same that I send you closed in this letter; and say (*tell*) your brother William that his horse hath one farcy and great running sores in his legs. God have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Saint Thomas's even, in great haste.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 6th of July,
1453. 31 H. VI.

LETTER LVIII.—(XLIV. vol. iii. p. 187.)

Though this letter, like many others in this collection, contains no matter of consequence, yet as it furnishes us with an instance of careful attention in the wife to her husband's affairs, and shows her anxious desire to have everything in readiness against his expected return, I think it will be agreeable to many of my readers.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that I have spoke with Newman for his place,³ and I am thorough with him therefor, but he would not let it in no wise less than five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*). I told him that sekerly (*certainly*) ye should not know but that I hired it of him for three pounds. I said as for the noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) I should pay it of mine own purse that ye should no knowledge have thereof; and this day I have had in two cartful of hay, and your stable shall be made I hope this next week. I could not get no grant of him to have the warehouse; he saith if he may in any wise forbear it hereafter, ye shall have it, but he will not grant it in no covenant. He hath granted me the house betwixt the vowe (*vaule*) and the warehouse, and that he said he granted not you.

And as for the chamber that ye assigned to mine uncle,⁴ God hath purveyed (*provided*) for him as his will is; he passed to God on Monday last past, at eleven of the clock before noon, and Sir John Heveningham passed

to God on Tuesday last past, whose souls both God assoil! his sickness took him on Tuesday at nine of the clock before noon, and by two afternoon he was dead.

I have begun your inventory, that should have been made ere this time if I had been well at ease; I hope to make an end thereof and of other things by this next week, and be in that other place if God send me health. I must do purvey for much stuff⁵ ere I come there, for there is neither boards nor other stuff that must needs be had ere we come there; and Richard hath gathered but little money since he came from you. I have sent John Norwood this day to Gresham, Besingham, and Matlaske, to get as much money as he may. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on the Utas⁶ day of Peter and Paul.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 6th of July,
1453. 31 H. VI.

¹ By this account it appears that the hour of dinner was between nine and ten o'clock in the forenoon.

² [More probably *sitid*, for fell.]

³ Newman's Place must have been a house of some consequence in the city of Norwich at this time, as the rent then set upon it was equivalent to a modern one of between sixty and eighty pounds a-year; and there being when she hired it no stable ready fitted up, shows how few horses were then kept in cities, &c.

⁴ Philip Berney, whose death was mentioned in the preceding letter, was brother to Margaret Maulby, the mother of Margaret Paston.

⁵ This must here mean household stuff, and I should suppose that the boards required were those used for long tables, forms, &c.

⁶ The octave, or eighth day following the festival.

LETTER LIX.—(XLV. vol. iii. p. 189.)

The exact date of this letter cannot be ascertained, it was, however, most probably previously to 1454, as Elizabeth Paston's brother, in his letter to Lord Grey, tells him, "there is, and hath been divers times, late communications of marriages with divers gentlemen not determined as yet, &c." Sir William Oldhall was a gentleman of large property in the county of Norfolk, and had been already married to, or afterwards did marry, Mary, daughter of William Lord Willoughby of Eresby, by whom he left an only daughter and heir, Mary. The marriage here proposed never took effect. I have dated this letter in 1453, though doubtfully. [This letter also displays a curious picture of the diplomatic manner in which marriages, even among persons of only moderate rank were conducted. The brother labours that Sir W. Oldhall shall have his sister: the sister prayeth him to bring it to a good conclusion, so "that it xall be bothe for hyr worchup and prfyt," and the mother is content "if ye can thynke that hys lond standyt cler."]

This letter be delivered to John Paston dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple at London, in haste.

I GREET you well, and let you weet that this day I was with my daughter your wife, and she was in good heel (*health*) at the making of this letter, thanked be God! and she let your sister and me weet of a letter which ye sent her, that ye have been laboured to for Sir William Oldhall to have your sister, and desiring in the said letter to have an answer in short time how she will be demeaned in this matter.

Your sister recommendeth her to you, and thanketh you heartily that ye will remember her, and let her have knowledge thereof, and prayeth you that ye will do your endeavour to bring it to a good conclusion, for she saith to me that she trusteth that ye will do so that it

shall be both for her worship and profit; and, as for me, if ye can think that his land standeth clear, inasmuch as I feel your sister well-willed thereto, I hold me well content.

And as for the obligation of the parson of Marlingford, which I sent you by John Newman, I pray you let it be sued; and as for the parson and Lyndesey they be accorded; and God have you in keeping, and send you his blessing and mine. Written at Norwich on Pulver Wednesday.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich,
Ash Wednesday, 6 March,
1453-4. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LX.—(XLVI. vol. iii. p. 193.)

This letter, from a lover to the brother of his mistress, seems dictated by good sense, and a proper regard for the lady; it shows his anxious wish that all preliminaries should be settled to the satisfaction of the lady's friends, and hints at his own impatience for a speedy conclusion in the following expressive words, "as to my conceythe y^e dayes be waxyn wonderly longe in a schorte tyme." On the back of the letter is written, in an ancient hand, "A l're somewhat touchyng a mariage yt should have been between the wth in named John Clopton and Elizabeth Paston sole daughter to Willm Paston, justice. Sed non cept eff'm." John Clopton, Esq., was one of those convicted on suspicion of receiving letters from Queen Margaret, with Sir Thomas Todenham, &c., before the Earl of Worcester, in Feb. 1461, when all of them, except Clopton, were beheaded. He married Alice, sister to Sir Robert Darcy, of Malden in Essex, and was alive in 1488. His father, Sir William Clopton, had estates at Long Melford, &c. in Suffolk. [But this projected marriage, though evincing more warmth of affection than was usually displayed, did not take place, and was probably broken off on pecuniary matters.]

Unto (my) right reverend Sir, and my good master, John Paston.

RIGHT worthy and worshipful sir, and my right good master, I recommend me unto you, thanking you evermore of your great gentleness and good masterhood showed unto me at all times, and specially now to my heart's ease, which on my part cannot be rewarded,

but my simple service is ever ready at your commandment; furthermore, as for the matter that ye weet of, I have laboured so to my father that your intent as for the jointure shall be fulfilled; and, Sir, I beseech you since I do my part to fulfil your will, that

ye will show me your good masterhood in her chamber¹ as my full trust is, insomuch that it shall nought hurt you nor none of yours, and the profit thereof shall be unto the avail of my mistress your sister, and to me, and to none other creature.

And also my mistress your mother shall not be charged with her board after the day of the marriage, but I to discharge her of her person; and to ease me that hath her chamber may be none contradiction.

And, Sir, I am ready, and always will to perform that I have said unto you, &c.

Furthermore liketh you to weet, I was on Thursday last past at Cavendish, to deliver an estate to Wentworth in the land that was my brother Cavendish's,² as I told you when I was last with you, and there I spake with Crane, and he besought me that I would send over to my mistress your mother for his excuse, for he might not be with her at this time; but on the Saturday in Easter week he will not fail to be with her, so he coun-

selled me that I and my brother Denston³ should meet with him there, and so without your better advice I and my brother purpose us to be with you there at that time, for the sooner the lever (*better for*) me, for, as to my conceit the days be waxen wonderly (*wonderfully*) long in a short time, wherefore I beseech you send me your advice how ye will have me ruled, &c.

No more I write to you at this present time, but beseeching you to recommend (*me*) in the lowliest wise, and the Trinity preserve you body and soul.

Written with my chancery hand in right great haste on the Friday before Palm Sunday.

Your

JOHN CLOPTON.

Friday, 12 April, 1454.
32 H. VI.

Handwritten signature: John Clopton

NUMBER LXI.—(XLVII. vol. iii. p. 197.)

On the back of the above indenture, in a more modern hand, is written, "The marriage w^{thyn} mentioned never toke effect, for the same Elizabeth was after first maryed to Rob^t Ponyns, arm., and then to S^r George Browne, knyght." I thought this draught of a marriage settlement too curious to be omitted.

Marriage Articles betwixt Agnes Paston, &c. on the one part and William Clopton, Esq. on the other part.

THIS indenture, made betwixt Agnes that was the wife of William Paston, John Paston her son, and John Damme,⁴ on the one part, and William Clopton,⁵ esquire, on the other part, witnesseth that accord is taken atwyn (*between*) the said parties, that John Clopton, son and heir of the said William Clopton, by the grace of God shall wed Elizabeth, the daughter of the said Agnes, for which mar-

riage the said Agnes, &c. shall pay to the said John Clopton four hundred marks (266l. 13s. 4d.) in hand of lawful money of England, and over that (*besides*), if the said marriage be holden with the said Agnes, the said Agnes shall bear the costages thereof the day of the wedding, with such chambering⁶ as shall be to the pleasure of the said Agnes: and the said William Clopton shall do [*cause*]⁷ his feoffees make a lawful estate to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 40l. over all charges borne,

¹ Perhaps it means some expenses for the accommodation of the bride. [We rather think he asks for Paston's intervention in his favour in her privacy.]

² The Cavendishes and Cranes were respectable families in the county of Suffolk.

³ John Denston, Esq., of Denston in Suffolk, married Catherine, daughter of Sir William Clopton, and sister to John Clopton.

⁴ John Damme was a burgess in parliament for the city of Norwich, and likewise recorder.

⁵ The Cloptons were a family of consequence.

⁶ This word is here used in a good sense, and probably means joyous entertainment and feasting—but it may mean certain expenses to be borne, or goods, &c., to be bought on this occasion. [The original is not *chambering* but "chaumb'yr" only, and there is little doubt, means furniture or decorations for the bride's chamber.]

⁷ [Fenn translates—*take care that.*]

to have and to hold to him (*for the*) term of his life, without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said John and Elizabeth and to his heirs male of her body lawfully begotten, without impeachment of waste, within twelve days after the said wedding.

And over that, within the said twelve days the said John shall do (*cause*) lawful estate to be made to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of forty marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) over all charges borne, to have and hold to the said William (*for*) term of his life, without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said Elizabeth, to have and hold to her (*for*) term of her life, without impeachment of waste.

Also it is accorded that the said William shall make estate of all the residue of his lands which he is seized of, or any other man

to his use, to such persons as the said John shall name, to the use of the said John.

Also the said John Clopton shall do (*cause*) lawful estate to be made to the said Elizabeth of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 30*l.* over all charges borne, to have and hold to her during the life of the said William.

And moreover the said John promytteth (*promiseth*) and ensureth by the faith of his body that he shall leave, over the 40*l.* worth (*of*) land abovesaid, to his heirs and issue male of the body of the said Elizabeth begotten, lands in fee simple or in tail to the yearly value of forty marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in case the same male issue be governed to the said John as the son oweth [*ought*] to be to the father.¹ And, &c.

About 1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXII.—(XLVIII. vol. iii. p. 201.)

The contents of this letter show my Lord Scales to be a gentleman and a man of honour, it betrays nothing of the tyranny of an ancient baron, but breathes the sentiments of a friend. At the bottom, in a hand of the time, is written,—"Li't. æ mich. xxxij^o." So that it fixes it to the 33rd of Henry VI.

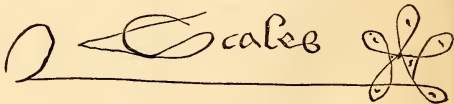
To my right well-beloved friend John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well; and forasmuch as I have understood that ye have do take (*caused to be taken*) a distress of certain beasts upon certain land, which I stand infeoffed in, in the town [*township*] of Palgrave,² for what cause I know not; wherefore I pray you that ye will make deliverance again of the said beasts, and if anything ye can ask be duty of right, set a day, and let your evidences and right be showed,

Walsingham, Friday, 17 May,
1454. 32 H. IV.

and I shall assign counsel of mine to be there to see it; and all that reason or law will I will be right glad ye have; and otherwise, I trow, ye would not desire: and if ye will do this, I will be well paid (*satisfied*); and else ye will constrain me to purvey otherwise, as law may guide me. Our Lord have you in governance. Written at Walsingham, the 17th day of May.

Your Friend, The LORD SCALES.³



¹ The concluding part of the settlement ought not to escape our observation, where the forty marks per annum settled on the issue male is to depend upon the good behaviour of such issue to the father.

² Palgrave by Swaffham, where J. Paston had^a manor.

³ Thomas Lord Scales, whose daughter and heir afterwards married Sir Anthony Widdville.—The letter is written by his secretary.

LETTER LXIII.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 77.)

[This letter is from William Botener, or Worcester [see Letter lxxxii.], a retainer of Sir John Fastolf's, to John Paston, and con-

tains merely the news of the day, political and private occurrences of no general interest at the present time.]

LETTER LXIV.—(XLIX. vol. iii. p. 203.)

We find about this time several alliances proposed to the family for their daughter Elizabeth, none of which as yet took place. This of Scroope seems to have been approved, not only by the young lady herself, but likewise by her mother and friends, though conditionally that a better could not be obtained. She afterwards married Robert Poynings, &c. ["So y^e his londe stande cleer"—this seems to have been the one thing needful in all the negotiations for marriage.]

To John Paston be this letter delivered.

Sox, I greet you well, with God's blessing and mine, and I let you weet that my cousin Clere writted (*wrote*) to me that she spake with Scroope after that he had been with me at Norwich, and told her what cheer that I had made him; and he said to her he liked well by the cheer that I made him.

He had such words to my cousin Clere, that, less than (*unless*) ye made him good cheer and gave him words of comfort at London, he would no more speak of the matter.

My cousin Clere thinketh that it were a folly to forsake him less than ye know of one other as good or better; and I have assayed your sister, and I found her never so willing to none as she is to him; if it be so that his land stand clear.

I sent you a letter by Brawnton for silk, and for this matter before my cousin Clere wrote to me, the which was written on the Wednesday next after Midsummer Day.

Sir Harry Inglose is right busy about Scroope for one of his daughters.

I pray you forget not to bring me my money from Orwellberry, as ye come from London, either all or a great part; the due debt was at Christmas last past, nothing allowed, 7*l.* 1*4s.* 8*d.* and at this Midsummer it is 5*l.* more; and though I allow him all his asking, it is but 1*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* less, but I am not so advised yet. As for the friar, he hath been at Saint Benet's, and at Norwich, and made great boast of the suit that he hath against me, and bought many boxes, to what intent I weet never; it is well done to beware at London, in dread if he bring any syse (*writ of assize*) at St. Margaret's (20th July) time.

I can no more, but Almighty God be our good Lord, who have you ever in keeping. Written at Oxnead in great haste, on the Saturday next after Midsummer.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Oxnead, Saturday, 29th of June,
1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXV.—(L. vol. iii. p. 205.)

In several letters we have seen Agnes Paston in the character of an active woman, attentive to her children, and her own private affairs, but in this she appears to no great advantage as a mother, her treatment of a daughter, now a woman, seems harsh and unseemly, even for the age in which it happened, though then the parental authority was carried to very different lengths to what it is in these days. We have before seen in the articles under which the Earl of Warwick took charge of the king's person, that he required, and had granted, a power to chastise his royal pupil. This same lady, in her directions to Master Greenfield (in letter cvii.), prays him to belash her son Clement well, "if he hath not done well, nor will not amend." These manners of the age therefore being considered, we shall be the less surprised at this now seemingly severe behaviour towards her daughter. Elizabeth Clere's reflections upon it do her credit, and assure us

that she thought the young lady's treatment from her mother very improper, as tending to force her into measures which might occasion much uneasiness to her family and friends.

To my cousin, John Paston, be this letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare and good speed in your matters, the which I pray God send you to his plesauce (*pleasure*) and to your heart's ease.

Cousin, I let you weet that Scroope¹ hath been in this country to see my cousin your sister, and he hath spoken with my cousin your mother, and she desireth of him that he should show you the indentures made between the knight that hath his daughter and him, whether that Scroope, if he were married and fortun'd to have children, if those children should inherit his land, or his daughter, the which is married.

Cousin, for this cause take good heed to his indentures, for he is glad to show you them, or whom ye will assign with you; and he saith to me he is the last in the taylor (*entail*) of his livelihood the which is three hundred and fifty marks (233*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and better, as Watkin Shipdam saith, for he hath taken a compt (*an account*) of his livelihood divers times; and Scroope saith to me if he were married and have a son and heir, his daughter that is married shall have of his livelihood fifty marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and no more; and therefore, cousin, meseemeth he were good for my cousin your sister with that (*without that*) ye might get her a better; and if ye can get a better I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great sorrow as she is now-a-days, for she may not speak with no man, whosoever come, ne not (*neither*) may see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her mother's, but that she beareth her an hand otherwise than she meaneth; and she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice on a day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore, cousin, she hath sent to me by Fryar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a letter of her heaviness,

and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you; and she saith if ye may see by his evidences that his children and hers may inherit, and she to have reasonable jointure, she hath heard so much of his birth and his conditions, that and (*if*) ye will she will have him, whether that her mother will or will not, notwithstanding it is told her his person is simple (*plain*), for she saith men shall have the more dainty [*deyute*]² of her, if she rule her to him as she ought to do.

Cousin, it is told me there is a goodly man in your inn, of the which the father died lately, and if ye think that he were better for her than Scroope, it would be laboured, and give Scroope a goodly answer, that he be not put off till ye be sure of a better; for he said when he was with me but if (*unless*) he have some comfortable answer of you he will no more labour in this matter, because he might not see my cousin your sister, and he saith he might have seen her and she had been better than she is; and that causeth him to deem that her mother was not well willing; and so have I sent my cousin your mother word; wherefore, cousin, think on this matter, for sorrow oftentime causeth women to beset them otherwise than they should do, and if she were in that case, I wot well ye would be sorry: cousin, I pray you burn this letter, that your men nor none other men see it; for and (*if*) my cousin your mother knew that I had sent you this letter, she should never love me. No more I write to you at this time, but Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written in haste, on Saint Peter's day, by candle light.

By your cousin,

ELIZABETH CLERE.³

St. Peter's Day,
Saturday, 29th of
June, 1454. 32
H. VI

Elizabeth Clere

¹ There was a noble family of this name at this time, but whether the gentleman here mentioned was a branch of it or not, does not appear. He was probably the son of Millicent, the wife of Sir John Fastolf.

² Penn translates "dainty," but this does not seem the right word. We know of no authority he has for such a translation. The word is more probably intended for duty, i. e. think her the more dutiful.]

³ Elizabeth Clere was the daughter and heir of Thomas Uvedale, Esq. of Taelneston, in Norfolk, and now the widow of Robert Clere, of Ormesby, Esq. She died in 1492.

LETTER LXVI.—(LI. vol. iii. p. 211.)

The ward here mentioned, I should suppose, was Thomas Fastolf of Ipswich, of whom Sir John Fastolf (in his letter to J. Paston, dated 11th of November, 1454) so much wished to have obtained the guardianship. This transaction might have happened previously to Sir John's letter in June, 1454, or in the December following in the same year, as Saint John Baptist's day is in the former, Saint John Evangelist's day in the latter month, but the exact date is immaterial. [It is, however, probably December 28, as that was the Saturday preceding Saint John the Evangelist in 1454.] The letter presents us with a curious instance of the methods used to obtain and secure the persons of minors, and shows us the warlike manner in which those travelled, who supposed they should meet with any resistance. The taking of a child like the ward with them, when most probably the real ward was conveyed another way, was an ingenious artifice to deceive those who might lay in wait to attack them, and endeavour to get possession of his person.

Unto my right worshipful master Paston be this bill delivered in haste.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved master, I commend me unto you, desiring to hear of your good prosperity and welfare; and as touching for Sir Philip Wentford,¹ he rode unto London ward upon Saint John's day, and on the evening afore he sent to my master for to have some of his men for to ride with him to Colchester, and for because he should not have no suspicion to me, I rode myself and a fellow with me; and he rode with an hundred horse with jackets² and salets³, and rusty haubergeons;⁴ and there rode with him Guybon of Debenham, and Timperley, and all the fellowship that they could make; and Guybon said that he would indict as many as he could understand that were of the other party; and Long Bernard was there also, and he made Sir Philip Wentford to turn again, and made every man to bend their bows and alight down off their horse, for to

weet and (if) any man would come against them; and he said how he should not let his way neither for Sir John Fastolf, nor for Paston, nor for none of them all.

And as for the ward he was not there, but there was had another child like him, and he rode next him, and when that he was two miles beyond Colchester, he sent him home again with a certain meny (*fellowship*); and Sir Philip Wentford, and Guybon of Debenham, and Timperley, and Bernard, they took a man of Stratford, a sowter (*a shoemaker*), and his name is Pearson, and they inquired him of every man's name of the other party; and he told them as many as he could; and they bade him inquire further for to know all; for they desired of him for to inquire as far as he could, and he should have well for his labour. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Ghost have you in his keeping. Written at Hadley, the Saturday after Saint John's day, and I beseech you heartily recommend me to my master Alblaster.

By your man,

R. DOLLAY.⁵

Hadley, in Suffolk,
Saturday, 29th of June,
or 28th of December, 1454.
32 or 33 H. VI.

¹ Though this name is here written Wentford, I rather believe it means Sir Philip Wentworth, of Nettlested, in Suffolk, who married Mary, the daughter of Lord Clifford.

² The jack or jacket, was a military vestment, calculated for the defence of the body, composed of linen stuffed with cotton, wool, or hair quilted, and commonly covered with leather.

³ A salet was a light helmet of various construction.

⁴ The haubergeon was a coat composed either of plate or chain-mail without sleeves. For a fuller account and view of these the reader is referred to Mr. Grose's accurate 'Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons.' Quarto, 1785.

⁵ R. Dollay seems to have been a servant belonging to some one of the party opposed to J. Paston, in J. Paston's interest.

LETTER LXVII.—(LII. vol. iii. p. 215.)

Edmund succeeded his grandfather, Reginald Lord Grey, of Ruthyn, in 1441. In 1464 he was appointed Lord Treasurer to Edward IV. and the next year created Earl of Kent. He died in 1489. The barony of Ruthyn is now in the Earl of Sussex. [It is now, 1840, vested in the Baroness Grey de Ruthyn, married to the Marquis of Hastings.] These letters discover to us the great attention paid by families to the proper disposition of the female branches in suitable and advantageous marriages. [But in this case, a subsequent letter shows Lord Grey was only labouring for his own private interest; and the following letter from J. Paston seems not to place any great degree of confidence in him.]

To my trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire, be this letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friend, I commend me to you, certifying you that and (if) your sister be not yet married, I trust to God I know that where she may be married to a gentleman of 300 marks (200*l.*) of livelihood, the which is a great gentleman born, and of good blood, and if ye think that I shall labour any farther therein, I pray you send me word by the bringer of this letter, for I have spoken

with the parties, and they have granted me that they will proceed no farther therein till I speak with them again, and therefore I pray you send me word in haste how that ye will be disposed therein, and God have you in his keeping. Written at Ampthill, the 11th day of July last past.

By EDMOND GREY,
Lord of Hastings, Waiford, and Ruthyn.

Ampthill,
Thursday, 11th
of July, 1454.
32 H. VI.

* N.B. At the bottom of this letter, in the hand-writing of John Paston, is the following memorandum:—
“Lib^{at}. p^r. Will^l. Aleyn Valett^r. dēi dñi xiiij. Julij A^o. xxxij^o. H. VI.”

LETTER LXVIII.—(LIII. vol. iii. p. 217.)

The following is transcribed from a copy of the original letter (in J. Paston's own hand) which he had sent to Lord Grey; it was preserved with the preceding one of his lordship to J. Paston. He shows himself in this letter not only a kind brother, but one who was attentive to his sister's welfare, for though this alliance came recommended by a nobleman, who assured him that the gentleman proposed was not only well born but had an handsome livelihood, yet he would give no positive answer till he knew for whom the application was made, and in what county his estate was situated. This letter, being only a copy, has no concluding subscription.

The Lord Grey.

RIGHT worshipful and my right good lord, I recommend me to your good lordship, and whereas it pleased your lordship to direct your letter to me for a marriage for my poor sister to a gentleman of your knowledge of 300 marks (200*l.*) livelihood, in case she were not married; wherefore I am greatly bound to do your lordship service; for sooth, my lord, she is not married, nor insured to no man; there is and hath been divers times and late, communication of such marriages with divers gentlemen not determined as yet, and whether the gentleman that your lordship

meaneth of be one of them or nay I doubt; and whereas your said letter specifieth that I should send you word whether I thought you should labour farther in the matter or nay. In that my lord I dare not presume to write so to you without I knew the gentleman's name; notwithstanding, my lord, I shall take upon me, with the advice of other of her friends, that she shall neither be married nor insured to no creature, nor farther proceed in no such matter, before the feast of the Assumption of our Lady (15th of August,) next coming, during which time your lord-

ship may send me, if it please you, certain information of the said gentleman's name, and of the place and country where his livelihood lieth, and whether he hath any children; and after I shall demean me in the matter as your lordship shall be pleased; for in good faith, my lord, it were to me great joy that my said poor sister were, according to her poor degree, married by

your advice, trusting then that ye would be her good lord.

Right worshipful and my right good lord, I beseech Almighty God to have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the 15th day of July.

Norwich, Monday, 15th of July,
1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXIX.—(LIV. vol. iii. p. 221.)

By the conversation that had passed between my Lord Grey and Billing, we find that his lordship had his own interest in view in the match he had proposed to John Paston for his sister, but on finding that his ward was not willing to give up to him the lady's fortune, he would proceed no farther in the proposal. Some part of this account, however, appears obscure.

To my right worshipful brother, John Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare. Billing¹ the serjeant hath been in his country, and he came to London this week; he sent for me and asked me how I fared; I told him here is pestilence; and said I fared the better (*that*) he was in good hele (*health*) for it was noised that he was dead; a toke (*he took*) me to him, and asked how my sister did, and I answered well, never better; he said he was with the Lord Grey, and they talked of a gentleman which is ward to my lord: I remember he said it was Harry Grey that they talked of; and my lord said, "I was busy within this few days to a maryd (*have married*) him to a gentlewoman in Norfolk, that shall have 400 marks (266l. 13s. 4d.) to her marriage, and now he will not be (*q? buy?*) me, for 400 marks would do me ease, and now he would have his marriage money himself, and therefore, quoth he, he shall marry himself for me."

These words had my lord to Billing, as he told me, he understood that my lord laboured for his own avail; and counselled to bid her be wise; and I thanked him for his good counsel.

I sent you an answer of your letter of Sir John Fastolf's coming home as he told me himself, nevertheless he bode (*staid*) longer

than he said himself he should ado (*have done*).

He told me he should make an end betwixt Scroop³ and my sister while he is in Norfolk; many would it should not prove, for they say it is an unlikely marriage.

In case Cressener⁴ be talked of any more, he is counted a gentlemanly man and a worshipful, ye know who is most worshipful better than I; at the reverence of God draw to some conclusion, it is time.

My Lord Chancellor⁵ come not here, since I came to London, neither my Lord of York.⁶

My Lord of Canterbury⁷ hath received

³ Scroope was a widower, and most probably much older than the lady, and therefore it is spoken of as an unlikely (*disproportioned*) marriage. He was the son-in-law of Sir John Fastolf.

⁴ Who Cressener was I cannot discover.

⁵ Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, was appointed chancellor in April, 1454.

⁶ This must be either Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, or William Booth, who was translated to the province of York in 1452, from Coventry and Litchfield.

⁷ Thomas Bourchier was elected by the convent to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury in April, 1454, from the see of Ely. He lived fifty-one years after his first consecration, dying in 1486, after he had been archbishop thirty-two years. No Englishman ever continued so long a bishop, nor has any archbishop either before or since his time enjoyed this dignity so many years. [The present Archbishop of York already nearly equals this. He was consecrated in 1791, forty-nine years, and has been archbishop since 1807, thirty-three years.]

¹ Thomas Billing was made a serjeant in 1453, and about 1469 was appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

² [Perhaps *be me for be with me*—agree with me.]

his cross, and I was with him in the king's chamber when he made his homage; I told Harry Wilton the demeaning betwixt the king and him, it were too long to write.

As for the priest that did arrest me, I cannot understand that it is the priest that ye mean.

Here is great pestilence;¹ I purpose to flee into the country. My Lord of Oxford² it come again fro the sea, and he hath gotten him little thank in this country; much more thing I would write to you, but I lack leisure.

Harry Wilton saw the king. My Lord of Ely³ hath done his few the (*faith or fealty*). God have you in his blessed keeping.

Written at London, on the Friday before our Lady's-day⁴ the nativity, in great haste. I pray recommend me to my sister and to my cousin Clere.

By your brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.⁵

London, Friday, 6th of September,
1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXX.—(LV. vol. iii. p. 225.)¹

On the back of this letter, in an ancient hand, is written as follows:—"Sir Jo. Fastolf willing to have married T. Fastolf to one of the daughters of Jo. Paston if he had obteyned the wardship of hym." This Thomas Fastolf appears by the pedigrees of the family to have been the son and heir of Nicholas Fastolf of Ipswich, by Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Braham, Knt., and cousin to Sir John Fastolf. He was at this time about ten years old, as appears by a subsequent letter, where his mother complains of those who had obtained the wardship of him, endeavouring to make him younger than he was, that they might keep longer possession of his livelihood. In 1465 she says he was above twenty-one years old. This is a very curious letter, as it affords us a true representation of the address made use of to get possession of a minor, not only that the management of his estate might be in the hands of the guardian, but likewise the power of marrying him to whom, and on what terms, he pleased. In this case the match proposed seems to have been a proper one if the young people, whose inclinations were never consulted on these occasions, happened to approve of each other; if they did not, they were both perhaps rendered miserable during their lives. This power of marrying the ward, when under the direction of a covetous or bad guardian, was often most shamefully abused; and, tyrannical as it was, it continued in force till the reign of Charles II. I should suppose that Sir J. Fastolf did not accomplish his purpose, both from what the mother of the young man complains of in the letter above alluded to, and from no marriage taking place between him and a daughter of J. Paston.

To the worshipful and my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston.

WORSHIPFUL and right well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you; like you to weet that I have received a letter at this time from John Bocking, with a copy of the patent concerning the wardship that ye wote of, by which I understand that ye have both wrought and holpen, by your great wisdom, to bring this matter about which I desired your friendship and good advice for, the surety of the said ward; and for expedition of which I thank you right heartily, and pray you to continue forth your good labours in the same, in such wise as it may be made sure in all wise, though it cost me the more of my good.

And whereas it is remembered me by the said letters that I should labour to get the

said ward into my governance, truly I cannot see how I could do it to be done, for I have none acquaintance in that country that I could trust to, without the sheriff might be my tender friend in this cause, or other such as ye think best; wherefore I pray you heartily to take this matter tenderly to heart, and that ye like (*to*) seek a mean of such friends as ye can best advise, and may verily trust upon, to guide this matter in such wise as mine intent might be sped for the possession of it; for now that I have gone so far in the matter,

³ William Gray, a man of noble birth and great learning: he continued bishop of Ely till 1478, when he died at Downham in Norfolk, and was buried in his own cathedral.

⁴ 8th of September.

⁵ William Paston was the fourth son of Sir William Paston, the judge; and having been a steady Lancastrian, had a pardon for all treasons, &c., under the Great Seal, dated 16th of July, 1468. 8 E. IV.

¹ I do not find this year marked as a year of pestence by our historians.

² John de Vere Earl of Oxford, beheaded in 1461.

I would not it failed for no good, but (*that*) it proved well and took to a good conclusion.

And whereas I have understood lately, by certain well-willers to you ward, which have moved me, that in case the said ward might be had that ye desire an alliance should take atwixt a daughter of yours and the said ward; of which motion I was right glad to hear of, and will be right well willing and helping that your blood and mine might increase in alliances; and if it please you that by your wisdom and good conduct that ye would help bear out this matter substantially against my party contrary and evil-willers that I might have mine intent, I ensure you ye and I should appoint and accord in such wise as ye should hold you right well pleased both for the increasing of your lineage and also of mine; and I pray you beware whom ye make of your counsel and mine in this matter, and that it may be well bore out ere ye come thence, and in a sure way; and if I had

known rather (*earlier*) of your intent, it should have cost me more of my good before this to have come to a good conclusion, which I promise yet shall be and (*if*) the matter take, by the faith of my body.

Worshipful and right well-beloved cousin, I pray God speed you in this matter, and send you your good desires. Written at Caister, the 11th day of November, in the 33d year of King Henry VI.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
Monday, 11 Nov. 1454. 33 H. VI.

Item,¹ cousin I pray you when ye see time, that my Lord of Canterbury,² and my Lord Cromwell³ may be spoken with for the goods of my Lord Bedford, being in divers men's hands, be compelled to be brought in, as ye shall see more along (*at large*) of this matter, with the writings that I have made mention (*of*) and left with John Bocking and William Barker.

LETTER LXXI.—(LVI. vol. iii. p. 231.)

On the back of the letter is written in an ancient hand, "The said Jo. Paston allied to St Jo. Fastolf by his wife, vidz. Mrgaret Mauteby, p'ut pat. infra." We have in this letter an instance of the desire of acquiring the wardship of rich minors, in order to make advantageous marriages for the families of those who were so fortunate as to obtain the care of them. Who the ward was is not here mentioned, but the young lady alluded to, and whom T. Howys, in pleasantry, I suppose, used to call his wife, must have been either Anne or Margery, daughters of J. Paston, the elder of whom could not have been at this time more than ten years old. [There is little doubt but that the ward was the J. Fastolf mentioned in preceding letter. Thomas Howys was an agent for Sir J. Fastolf and the present letter is dated from Caister. See letter xxix. p. 20.]

To the worshipful Sir, and my good master, John Paston, at London, in haste.

WORSHIPFUL and reverend Sir, and my good master, I recommend me to you in as diligent wise as on my part appertaineth, and please you to weet that my master was right well pleased with your faithful labour in fulfilling the patent for the ward of A. B. C. and he will faithfully labour as ye have advised him by writing of John Bocking; and (*to*) put my master in more courage, I moved to him upon mine head, that in case be the child were wise, that then it were a good marriage between my wife your daughter and

him; and, Sir, my master was glad when he heard that mean, considering that your daughter is descended of him by the mother's side; and, Sir, I have inquired after the said child, and no doubt of but he is likely and of great wit, as I hear by report of sundry persons; and it is so, as I am credibly informed, that Jeffrey Boleyn⁴ maketh great labour for marriage of the said child to one of his daughters; I would well to him, but better to you; wherefore that ye diligently labour for expedition of this matter, that in case ye can

¹ This relates to the money due to Sir John Fastolf from the Duke of Bedford, as his share of the ransom paid by the Duke of Alençon, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Verneuil in 1424. See Letter xci. p. 70, and the notes thereto.

² Thomas Bouchier was elected from the see of Ely to the archiepiscopal dignity in April this year.

³ Henry Lord Cromwell.

⁴ Sir Jeffrey Boleyn was Lord Mayor of London in 1457, and at this time had two daughters, Isabel, afterwards married to William Cheyne, Esq. and Anne, afterwards the wife of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorpe, Knt. This Jeffrey was great grandfather to Queen Anne Boleyn, the Queen of Henry VIII.

find any mean there to have the said child, and we shall do faithfully our diligence in like wise here, as ye advise us, &c.

And, Sir, as ye think with advice of my master, Yelverton, Jenney, and others my master's counsel therein, that the sheriff may be rewarded,¹ and if my said master's counsel think it be to (be) done, that then ye like to take an action² upon an attaint, which ye must with them take upon you at this time in my master's absence, for as ye do in

that matter he will hold him content, for William Barker hath an instruction of my master's intent upon the same. And I send John Barker a copy of the panel, which I showed you at Caister, &c.

Almighty Jesu have you eternally in his merciful governance. Written at Caister the Wednesday next after Saint Martin, anno 33 (H. VI.)

THOMAS HOWYS.

Caister, Wednesday, 13 Nov. 1454.
33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXII.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 81.)

This short, though curious letter, conveys to us a very particular account of the king's disorder from himself; he mentions his total loss of memory, which, from the circumstances here related, appears to have commenced about October 1453, and to have continued till Christmas, 1454. From this letter, likewise, we may form a true judgment of this king's character and disposition as to clarity, devotion, and meekness.

To my well-beloved cousin, John Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT well-beloved cousin, I recommended me to you, letting you weet such tidings as we have.

Blessed be God, the king is well amended, and hath been since Christmas Day; and on Saint John's day commanded his almoner to ride to Canterbury with his offering, and commanded the secretary to offer at Saint Edward's.

And on the Monday afternoon the Queen came to him, and brought my Lord Prince³ with her, and then he asked what the prince's name was, and the queen told him Edward; and then he held up his hands, and thanked God thereof.

And he said he never knew him till that time; nor wist not what was said to him, nor wist not where he had been, whilst he hath been sick till now; and he asked who were godfathers, and the queen told him, and he was well apaid (*content*).

And she told him that the cardinal⁴ was dead; and he said, he knew never thereof till that time; and he said, one of the wisest lords in this land was dead.

And my Lord of Winchester⁵ and my lord of Saint John's⁶ were with him on the morrow after Twelfthday, and he spake to them as well as ever he did; and when they came out they wept for joy.

And he saith he is in charity with all the world, and so he would all the lords were.

And now he saith matins of Our Lady, and evensong, and heareth his mass devoutly.

And Richard shall tell you more tidings by mouth.

I pray you recommend me to my Lady Morley, and to Master Prior, and to my Lady Felbrigg, and to my Lady Heveningham, and to my cousin your mother, and to my cousin your wife.

Written at Greenwich,⁷ on Thursday after twelfthday.

By your cousin,
EDMUND CLERE.

Greenwich,
Thursday, 10th of
January, 1454.
33 H. VI.



¹ [This word seems here to be used ironically. The nature of the affair does not appear, but it evidently had no reference to the wardship.]

² An action of attaint lies, after judgment, against a jury that hath given a false verdict in any Court of Record, if the debt or damages are above 40s.

³ Prince Edward was born at Westminster, in October, 1453. 32 H. VI.

⁴ John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal, &c. died on the 22nd of March, 1453.

⁵ William de Wainfleet, Lord Bishop of Winchester.

⁶ Robert Botill, Lord Prior of St. John's of Jerusalem, in Middlesex.

⁷ Greenwich was at this time the residence of the court, in which Edmund Clere, the writer of this letter, had an appointment. He was a younger son of John Clere, by Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Philip Branch, Knight, and, by the gift of his mother, possessed manors and estates in Norfolk and Suffolk. This ancient family was seated at Ormsby in Norfolk. The letter has the impression of a rose on the seal.

LETTER LXXIII.—(LVII. vol. iii. p. 233.)

Though Sir John Fastolf knew the meaning of these scornful words mentioned in this letter, we at this distance of time shall find a difficulty in explaining them. They seem to signify, that Sir John was a gascon, (*a boaster*;) and that it was necessary to beware of him, as those who eat at his table were often deceived by him to their cost. At the time that this spirited letter was dictated by him and written by his secretary, he was nearly eighty years of age; we see, however, the youthful ardour of the veteran soldier rekindling at the insulting language used in his absence to defame his character.

To my right trusty and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, in goodly haste.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you; and please you to weet that I am advertised that at a dinner in Norwich, where as ye and other gentlemen were present, that there were certain persons, gentlemen, which uttered scornful language of me, as in this wise with more, saying, "War the gosune, war, and go we to dinner, go we where? to Sir John Fastolf's and there we shall well pay therefore." What their meaning was I know well to no good intent to me ward; wherefore, cousin, I pray you, as my trust is in you, that ye give me knowledge by writing what gentlemen they be that had this

report with more; and what more gentlemen were present, as ye would I should and (*it*) were my duty to do for you in semblable (*similar*) wise. And I shall keep your information in this matter secret; and with God's grace so purvey for them as they shall not all be well pleased. At such a time a man may know his friends and his foes asunder, &c.

Jesu preserve and keep you, written at Caister, the 7th day of February, in the 33rd year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight*.

Caister,

Thursday, 7 Feb. 1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXIV.—(LVIII. Vol. iii. p. 237.)

[This letter is from John Martin, abbot of St. Benedict's, in the parish of Ludham, Norfolk, dated March 17, 1454-55, containing an invitation to J. Paston to dinner,

written, not in the style of a scholar or an ecclesiastic, but in the polite manner of a man of the world and gentleman.]

LETTER LXXV.—(LIX. vol. iii. p. 239.)

We have often seen Margaret Paston in the character of the attentive, careful, and obedient wife; we here view her as the tender and disconsolate one. Her sorrow for her husband's displeasure at her "simpleness" is expressed in the most artless and affectionate manner; could he "bere hevynesse in his hert ayens her" after this letter?

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, beseeching you that ye be not displeased with me, though my simpleness caused you for to be displeased with me; by my truth it is not my will neither to do nor say that should cause you for to be displeased, and if I have done (*it*), I am sorry thereof, and will amend it; wherefore I beseech you to forgive me, and that ye bear none heaviness in your heart against me, for your displeasure should be too heavy to me to endure with.

I send you the roll that ye sent for, enclosed, by the bringer hereof; it was found in

your trussing coffer.¹ As for herring,² I have bought an horse-load for 4s. 6d. I can get none eels yet; as for bever³ there is promised me some, but I might not get it yet.

¹ [Clothes chest.]

² These herrings and eels were for their Lent provision, and this letter was probably written in 1454, when the first Sunday in Lent was March 10.

³ [Bever is generally explained as a meal between dinner and supper; the term is still used among farming labourers in Essex for the luncheon between breakfast and dinner; but it cannot be used in any such sense here, nor can it be used for *beverage*—drink.]

I sent to Joan Pettehe to have an answer for the windows, for she might not come to me; and she sent me word that she had spoken thereof to Thomas Ingham, and he said that he should speak with you himself, and he should accord with you well enough, and said to her it was not her part to desire of him to stop the lights; and also he said it was not his part to do it, because the place is his but for years.

And as for all other errands that ye have commanded for to be done, they shall be done as soon as they may be done. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, on the Monday next after Saint Edward.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Monday,
March, 1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXVI.—(XIX. Vol. i. p. 85.)

This letter appears to have been written by the earl's secretary, and signed in the same hand, "Ric Erle Warwyke;" it has no date, but was most probably written before the civil wars openly broke out between the houses of York and Lancaster. It is in the plural style, as we and our, &c.

To our right trusty and well-beloved friend, Sir Thomas Todenham.¹

RIGHT trusty, and well-beloved friend, we greet you well, heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which we pray God preserve to your heart's desire; and if it please you to hear of our welfare, we were in good health at the making of this letter, praying you heartily that ye will consider our message, which our chaplain, Master Robert Hopton, shall inform you of; for, as God knoweth, we have great business daily, and have had here before this time, wherefore we pray you to consider the purchase that we have made with one John

Swyffhcote (*Southcote*), Esquire, of Lincolnshire of ²88*l.* by the year, whereupon we must pay the last payment the Monday next after St. Martin's Day (11*th* of November), which sum is 45*8l.* wherefore we pray you with all our heart, that ye will lend us ten or twenty pounds, or what the said Master Robert wants of his payment, as we may do for you in time for to come, and we shall send it you again afore New Year's Day with the grace of God, as we are a true knight.³

¹ Sir Thomas Todenham, born in 1399, was the second son of Sir Robert Todenham, but, by the death of his elder brother, became his heir, and resided at Oxburgh in Norfolk. Whilst under age, in 1417, he married Agnes, daughter of John Wodehouse, Esq., and in 1436, after a full hearing of the cause at Lynn, before the Chancellor of Norwich, the Prior of Lynn, &c., he was divorced from her, on proof, and on her own confession, of adultery; and had power to marry again. She had before this left him, and was at the time of her conviction a nun professed, at Crabbhouse, in Wiggenshall, in Norfolk. The close of his life was still more unfortunate, for in February, 1461, 1 E. IV. John, Earl of Oxford, Aubrey, his son and heir, this Sir Thomas Todenham, John Clopton, John Montgomery, and William Tyrrel, Esqrs., were arrested by John Earl of Worcester, Constable of England, on suspicion of having received letters from Margaret, queen of Henry VI.; and being convicted in court before the said Earl of Worcester, were all beheaded (ex-

cept Clopton) on Tower Hill, on the 22d of February, 1461.

² It is to be wished that this letter had mentioned the sum already paid, as we could then have exactly determined the purchase money for an estate of 88*l.* a-year in those days.

³ His promise for the repayment of the money at the time fixed is *by his knighthood*, a sacred promise in that age of chivalry. Sir Thomas was a man of large property, and rich in money likewise. [Mr. Hallam, in his 'View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' iii. 452, is inclined to think this application was one of many addressed by the Earl of Warwick to his adherents for the purpose of raising a considerable sum, and thus ensuring their adhesion. But we think the particularity of the detail as to the purpose for which he required it, and the promise of so speedily a repayment, is against the supposition. The scarcity of coin, upon which we have before remarked, seems to us a sufficient cause, without searching deeper.]

For there is none in your country that we might write to for trust so well as unto you, for, as we be informed, ye be our well willer, and so we pray you of good continuance.

Wherefore we pray you that ye consider our intent of this money, as ye will that we do for you in time to come, as God knoweth, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, on All Soul's day,

within our lodging in the Grey Friars,¹ within Newgate.

RICHARD EARL OF WARWICK.

London,

2nd of November, before
1455. 34 H. VI.



The seal of this letter is of red wax, on which is the bear and ragged staff, the badge of this nobleman, with his motto, the whole very fair and curious, and around it is a braid of twine.

LETTER, LXXVII.—(XX. vol. i. p. 89.)

This letter is written by the secretary, and signed by the Earl himself; it has no date of the year, but was certainly written before 1460, for in that year the Earl presented Richard Cheyne to the rectory of Little Snoring, which was an appurtenant to the manors, and which, when this letter was written, had been lately purchased. This and the preceding letter, though they contain nothing curious in themselves, yet deserve a place in this collection, as being perhaps the only private letters extant of this nobleman, who, from his great power and authority, was called the King Maker; and from his large possessions and magnificent style of living, the great Earl of Warwick. He was the son and heir of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and married Anne, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who on the death of Anne Countess of Warwick (the only child of her brother Henry Duke of Warwick) in her infancy, became heir to the honours and inheritance of her family. Richard, in right of his lady, assumed the title of Earl of Warwick, and in 1449 obtained a confirmation of it from Henry VI. In 1460 he succeeded his father as Earl of Salisbury, and was killed in the battle of Barnet, on Easter-day 1471. [They also incidentally show, what we have previously remarked on, the great scarcity of money; and also the desire, not yet extinct, of the aristocracy to add to their landed property, doubtless as a means of extending their influence.]

To the worshipful and my right trusty friend, John Paston, Esquire.

WORSHIPFUL and my right trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well, and forasmuch as I have purchased of the worshipful and my well-beloved friend, Prior of Walsingham,² two manors in Little Snoring with the appurtenances in the county of Norfolk, which manors be cleped (*called*) Bowle's and Walcote's.

I desire and heartily pray you that ye will show to me, and my feoffees in my name, your good will and favour; so that I may by your friendship the more peaceably enjoy my aforesaid purchase.

And moreover I pray you to give credence in this matter to my well-beloved chaplain

Sir John Southwell, bearer of this my letter.

And in the same matter to be my faithful friend, as my great trust is in you; wherein ye shall do to me a singular pleasure, and cause me to be to you right good lord, which some time shall be to you available by the grace of God, who preserve you and send you welfare.

Given under my signet at Middleham,³ the 23d day of August.

Richard Earl of } R. WARWICK.
Warwick, }

Middleham,
23d of August, before 1460. 38 H. VI.

¹ The Earl of Warwick lodged at his house in the Grey Friars when he came to London, by the king's desire, in February, 1458, to meet the lords of the opposite party on amicable terms.

² Thomas Hunt was prior from 1437 to 1474.

³ The lordship of Middleham in Yorkshire came to the family of Neville by the marriage of Robert de Neville with Mary, the daughter and co-heir of Ralph Fitz-Randulph.

LETTER LXXVIII.—(XXI. vol. i. p. 93.)

his letter of the Duke of York, written by his secretary, with his title at the top, and in the regal style, was most probably sent when he was Protector of the Kingdom in 1454, or 1455. It is sealed on red wax, with his own signet, having the arms of France and England quarterly, and a label of three points argent, charged with nine torteauxes. The purport of the first part of it is to thank J. Paston for some services done by him, in regard to some disputes which the prior and convent of Walsingham had had relative to some estates. Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, &c., father of Edward IV. Protector of the Kingdom under Henry VI. was slain, when very near the summit of his wishes, the throne, in the battle of Wakefield, in December 1460, having been imprudently tempted out of his castle of Sandal, by the menaces and defiance of Queen Margaret. He married Cecily, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland, and sister to Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, father of the Earl of Warwick.

To our right trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire.

THE DUKE OF YORK.

RIGHT trusty and well beloved, we greet you heartily well. And of your benevolence, aid, and tender love by you, at the instance and at the reverence of us, to our right trusty and well-beloved in God, the prior and convent of the house of our Lady of Walsingham, of our patronage, in such matters as they had ado¹ (*business*) for certain livelihood by them claimed to belong unto the said house, favourably and tenderly showed, as heartily as we can we thank you. And desire and pray you of your good continuance.

And as far as right, law, and good conscience will, to have in favourable recommendation such persons as (*have*) been, or shall be, committed to take possession and

seisin, in the name and to the use of our full worshipful nephew, the Earl of Warwick, in and of the manors and lordships of Bowle's and Walcote's, with the appurtenances, in Little Snoring, in the county of Norfolk, as our great trust is unto you. And God have you in his keeping.

Given under our signet, at our castle of Sandal, the 19th day of August.

Sandal Castle,
19th of August,
1454, or 1455,
32 or 33 H. VI.



LETTER LXXIX.—(XXII. vol. i. p. 97.)

I have placed this and the following letter together, as they both contain instructions from the nobility for returning persons of their nomination as knights of the shire. We have here a true picture of the dependence of the House of Commons on that of the Lords. Neither of the letters have any date of the year. [But, from the names, it clearly refers to the election afterwards noticed by John Jenny (Letter lxxxiii.). The dependence, however, was not so complete as Sir John Fenn asserts, at least in this county, for it seems that John Howard was strongly objected to, and we know that even in these disturbed times the House of Commons occasionally showed great independence, and proved that they were not of the king's "menyall s'vaunts." In Nov., 1455, the same House of Commons insisted on its right of taking part in the nomination of a protector, in opposition to the claims of the clergy and nobility, and after refusing to proceed to any other business till this demand was settled, had the right allowed. (See 'Pictorial History of England,' vol. ii. p. 23.)]

To our right trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

THE DUCHESS OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved, we greet you heartily well; and forasmuch as it is thought right necessary for diverse causes that my lord have at this time in the parliament such persons as belong unto him, and be of his

menial servants; wherein we conceive your goodwill and diligence shall be right expedient; we heartily desire and pray you that, at the contemplation of these our letters, as our special trust is in you, ye will give and apply your voice unto our right well-beloved cousin and servants, John Howard, and Sir Roger Chamberlayn, to be knights of the

¹ [Ado is to do.]

shire; exhorting all such others as by your wisdom shall now be behoveful, to the good exploit and conclusion of the same.

And in your faithful attendance and true devour in this part ye shall do unto my lord and us a singular pleasure, and cause us hereafter to thank you therefore, as ye shall hold

you right well content and agreed with the grace of God, who have you ever in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham Castle, the 8th day of June.

Framlingham Castle,
8th of June.

LETTER LXXX.—(XXIII. vol. i. p. 99.)

The contents of this letter plainly point out to us that the election of the members of the House of Commons, even for counties, was in this distant age influenced by the great and leading men of the time. We have here the clearest evidence that Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, at their meeting at Bury St. Edmund's in Suffolk, determined who should be returned knights of the shire for the county of Norfolk, and sent their instructions accordingly. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, at this time, seems to have been a friend to the Duke of York: this letter therefore, must have been written previous to the Duke's professed design upon the throne; for in that contest the Earl sided with the house of Lancaster, and being taken, was beheaded in 1461, the first year of Edward IV., when he was about 55 years old. He married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight, who had possessions at Winch, in Norfolk. The names of the two candidates to be elected are written on a schedule, or strip of paper, which is fastened to the original letter by a piece of wax. [No doubt the influence of great and leading men must have had much weight, but this letter goes far to prove that it was effected by agreement and compromise among the leading men, and does not greatly militate against the independence of the house. Oxford and Norfolk appear here to have each nominated one, but after the battle of St. Alban's, Norfolk's party being predominant, he names both, for we believe this letter should precede that of the Duchess of Norfolk just given.]

To our well-beloved John Paston.

RIGHT well beloved, I greet you well; and as touching for tidings I can none, saving that my Lord of Norfolk met with my Lord of York at Bury on Thursday, and there were together till Friday nine of the clock, and then they departed; and there a gentleman of my Lord of York took, unto a yeoman of mine, John Deye, a token and a sedell (*schedule*) of my lord's intent whom he would have knights of the shire, and I send you a sedell closed

(*schedule enclosed*) of their names in this same letter, wherefore me thinketh (*it*) well done to perform my lord's intent, &c.

Written the 18th day of October at Winch.

OXENFORD.

County of { Sir WILLIAM CHAMBERLAYN.
Norfolk, { HENRY GREY.

Winch, in Norfolk,
18th of October, before 1455.

LETTER LXXXI.—(XXIV. vol. i. p. 101.)

The account in this letter refers to the first battle of St. Alban's, which Rapin says was fought on the 31st of May, 1455, 33 H. VI., but which all our other historians place on the 23rd of May. This letter certainly fixes it before the 25th (Whitsunday); therefore it was most probably fought on Friday the 23rd. History informs us that Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, and eldest son and heir of the Duke of Buckingham, died of the wounds he received in this battle: when this letter therefore was written he was not dead. And we are told by our historians that the king lost 5000 or 8000 men, though Holinshed thinks it should be only 800, whereas this letter says only six score; how this prodigious difference in numbers can be reconciled, I own I cannot form any conjecture. [Hume and the 'Pictorial History of England,' say May 22. That the statement of the loss is an absurd exaggeration there can be no doubt. The force on either side it seems was far from large; that of the Duke of York, according to Whethamsted, Abbot of St. Alban's, who appears to have been present, did not amount to more than 3000 men. Hallam, 'Middle Ages,' says, "surely this testimony outweighs a thousand ordinary chroniclers."]

Unto my worshipful and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful and entirely well-beloved Sir, I recommend me unto you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare.

Furthermore letting you weet, as for such

tidings as we have here, such three lords be dead, the Duke of Somerset,¹ the Earl

¹ Edmund Beaufort Duke of Somerset, &c.; he was

of Northumberland,¹ and the Lord Clifford,³ and as for any other men of name, I known one, save only Quotton³ (*Cotton*) of Cambridgeshire.

As for any other lords, many of them be hurt, and as for Fenyngley he liveth and fareth well, as far as I can inquire, &c.

And as for any great multitude of people that there was, as we can tell, there was at most slain (x) six score;⁴ and as for the lords that were with the king, they and their men were pilled (*plundered*) and spoiled out of all their harness and horses; and as for what rule we shall have yet I weet not, save only there be made new certain officers.

My Lord of York⁵ Constable of England;

my Lord of Warwick⁶ is made Captain of Calais; my Lord Burghier⁷ is made Treasurer of England; and as yet other tidings have I none.

And as for our sovereign lord, thanked be God he hath no great harm.

No more to you at this time, but I pray you send you this letter to my Mistress Paston when ye have seen it; praying you to remember my sister Margaret against the time that she shall be made a nun.

Written at Lamethith (*Lambeth*) on Whitsunday,⁸ &c.

By your cousin, JOHN CRANE.

Lambeth,

Whitsunday, 25th of May, 1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXII.—(XXV. vol. i. p. 105.)

This letter, written in the beginning of June, gives a plain narrative of the state of affairs respecting both parties, immediately after the first battle of St. Alban's, which was fought on the 23rd (22nd) of May, 1455. William Worcester, the son of William de Worcester, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Botoner, was born at Bristol, about the year 1415, 3 H. V. was educated at Oxford, &c. at the expense of Sir John Fastolf, Kt. with whom he afterwards lived at Caister in Norfolk, and to whom he was esquire, historian, and executor. He sometimes styled himself William Botoner, and at other times William Botoner, al's Worcester. He was a man of great application to learning, versed in various sciences, and indefatigable in the study of the antiquities of this kingdom. He wrote many works, and was alive in 1480.

To William Worcester be this letter delivered in haste.

SIR, I recommend me to you, and as for tidings ye may inform mine master, that for new there is none but that he hath knowledge of.

But that the king, the queen and the prince, remove to Hertford to-morrow without fault; my Lord of York⁵ to the Fryers at Ware; my Lord of Warwick⁶ to Hunsdon; the Earl of Salisbury⁹ to Rye; and there they shall abide to the time the parliament begins.¹⁰

The Duke of Buckingham¹¹ is come in,

and sworn that he shall be ruled, and draw the line with them; and thereto he and his brothers be bound by recognizance in notable sums to abide the same.

The Earl of Wiltshire¹² sent to the lords, from a place of his called Petersfield, a letter desiring to know if he should come and abide about the king's person as he did before, and if he should not, then that they would license him to go into Ireland, and live there upon his lands, &c. And before this done, the lords were advised to have made him to

some years Regent of Normandy, and in this battle commanded the royal army.

¹ Henry Percy Earl of Northumberland, had been a favourite with Henry V., and continued a loyal and faithful subject to his son Henry VI.: when slain he was about sixty years of age.

² Thomas Clifford Lord Clifford.

³ William Quotton or Cotton, of Landwade, in Cambridgeshire, was vice-chamberlain to Henry VI.

⁴ In the original letter the x is struck out, and vj placed after it in the same line.

⁵ Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

⁶ Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick.

⁷ Henry Bourchier, Viscount Bourchier.

⁸ Whitsunday in 1445 fell on the 25th of May.

⁹ Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury.

¹⁰ The parliament was summoned to meet on Wednesday, 9th of July, 1455.

¹¹ Humphry Stafford Duke of Buckingham, &c., slain at Northampton in 1460.

¹² James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire, son and heir of James Butler, Earl of Ormond.

do as the Duke of Buckingham hath done and no more; but what that will fall now thereof, no man can tell as yet.

The Baron of Dudley¹ is in the Tower, what shall come of him God wot.

The Earl of Dorset² is in ward with the Earl of Warwick.

It was said, forsooth, that Harper and two other of the king's chamber,³ were confederated to have sticked (*stabbed*) the Duke of York in the king's chamber, but it was not so, for they have cleared them thereof. But London upon the same tale arisen, [*has risen*] and every man to harness, on Corpus Christi even (*5th of June*), and much ado there was.

Sir William Oldhall abideth no longer in sanctuary than (*till*) the chief justice come; for (*at*) that time he shall go at large and sue all his matters himself, &c.

The Baron Dudley hath impeached many men; but what they be as yet we cannot weet.

Sir Philip Wentworth was in the field,

and bore the king's standard, and cast it down and fled; my Lord of Norfolk⁴ saith he shall be hanged therefore, and so is he worthy: he is in Suffolk now, he dares not come about the king.

Edmund Stendale was with Wenlock there in the field, and foully hurt.

Fylongley⁵ is at home at his own place with his wife, and shall do right well, but we have a great loss of his absence this term, for it will be long ere he come this term, I am afraid.

All the lords that died at the journey (*battle*) are buried at St. Alban's.

Other things be none here, but ye shall see by Thomas Scales' letter the rule of the Frenchmen, &c.

God speed us well in our matters this term, I pray to God, who have you in his keeping, &c.

W. B.

London, June, 1455.

33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXIII.—(LX. vol. iii. p. 241.)

This is a true picture of modern electioneering, and such a letter might be written from any county or town in the kingdom during the time that a choice for members was depending. The exact date of this letter cannot be ascertained; John Jenney was member for the city of Norwich in 1452, and again in 1477, but if this letter be addressed to John Paston the father, (and I rather think it is,) it must have been written I believe about 1455, when a parliament was summoned to meet in July. John Jenney, indeed, was not then returned, but that does not signify, as he seems to have doubts whether he should be so or not. He married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Thomas Wetherby, the rich alderman of Norwich, who had been mayor in 1427, and 1432, and representative in parliament for that city in 1437, on whose decease, in 1445, he inherited the estate at Intwood, in right of his wife. He was afterwards deputy recorder and standing counsel for the city, and died in 1497. [We have not altered Fenn's arrangement, though we have no doubt that this letter refers to the same election as Letters lxxix. and lxxx. A parliament was summoned to meet on March, 6, 1452-3, and was dissolved Feb. 14, 1453-4. The next parliament met on July 9, 1455, and sat till Jan. 14, 1455-6. In Oct. 1454, a new parliament being expected, the Duke of Norfolk and Earl of Oxford agree upon two candidates; in June, 1455, the Duchess names both, and in this letter it appears the nomination was not agreeable to the freeholders. Jenney himself observes, "sum men holde it right strange to be in this plement, and me thinketh they be wyse men that soo doo," which would certainly be the case in a parliament held so immediately after the battle of St. Alban's.]

To my worshipful master John Paston, Esquire.

My master Paston, I recommend me to you, and where(*as*) ye should be informed that I should say to Howard⁶ that ye laboured

to be knight of the shire, I said never so to him; I told my Lord of Norfolk at London that I laboured divers men for Sir Roger

¹ ——— Sutton, Baron Dudley.

² Henry Beaufort, Earl of Dorset, son and heir of the late Duke of Somerset. He is here styled only Earl of Dorset, though, by the death of his father at the battle of St. Alban's, he was now Duke of Somerset, &c.

³ Grooms of the king's chamber.

⁴ John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk; he died in 1461.

⁵ He appears to have been a lawyer, and it seems as if he had been wounded in the battle of St. Alban's. [Is he not the Fenyngley of the preceding letter?]

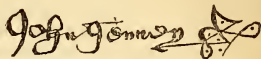
⁶ Howard was a relation to John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, whose character here appears to be that of a man who often talked without consideration.

Chamberlayn, and they said to me they would have him, but not Howard, inasmuch as he had no livelihood in the shire nor conversement (*acquaintance or intercourse*). And I asked them whom they would have, and they said they would have you, and thus I told him; and he said unadvisedly, as he can do full well; I might not say ye laboured therefore, for I heard never say ye laboured therefore by the faith I vowed to God.

As for this writ of the parliament of Norwich, I thank you that ye will labour therein; as for my friends there, I trust right well all the aldermen except Brown¹ and such as be in his danger;² I pray you speak to Walter Jeffery³ and Harry Wilton,⁴ and make them

to labour to your intent. I pray you that if ye think that it will not be, that it like you to say that you move it of yourself, and not by my desire. Some men hold it right strange to be in this parliament,⁵ and me thinketh they be wise men that so do. Written at Intwood,⁶ on St. John's day, in haste.

Your servant,
JOHN JENNEY.



Intwood, St. John's day,
24th of June, about 1455.
33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXIV.—(XXVI. vol. i. p. 109.)¹

This letter shows us, how the Duke of York's party endeavoured to throw the blame of the battle at St. Alban's upon each other; and that the parliament accused the Duke of Somerset, Thomas Thorpe, a Baron of the Exchequer,¹ and William Joseph, Esq., as the cause of it, they having secreted (as it was said) from the king a conciliatory letter sent for him by the Duke of York. The unsettled state of the nation, and the violent commotions of the times, are plainly pointed out.

Unto my most faithful brethren, John Bocking, and William Worcester, and to either of them.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my most heartily and best-beloved brother, I recommend me unto you in more lowly wise than I can either think or write; and with all my service and true heart thank you of your gentle letters, full brotherly written unto me at many times of old, and especial of late time passed. And truly, brother, I thank Almighty God of your welfare, of the which the bearer of this my poor letter certified me of, &c.

And, Sir, as touching all manner of new tidings, I know well ye are avarous (*eagerly desirous*); truly the day of making of this letter there were none new, but such (*as*) I heard of ye shall be served withal.

As for the first, the king, our sovereign

lord, and all his true lords, stand in health of their bodies, but not all at hearts' ease as we.

Amongst other marvel, two days afore the writing of this letter there was a language between my Lords of Warwick⁷ and Cromwell⁸ afore the king; insomuch as the Lord Cromwell would have excused himself of all the stirring or moving of the male journey [*evil day*]⁹ of St. Alban's; of the which excuse making my Lord Warwick had knowledge, and in haste was with the king, and swore by his oath, that the Lord Cromwell said not truth, but that he was the beginner of all that journey at St. Alban's; and so between my said two Lords of Warwick and Cromwell there is at this day great grudging,

¹ Richard Brown was mayor of Norwich in 1454, and member for that city in 1460.

² This means in *his debt*, and therefore under his influence.

³ Walter Jeffery was under-sheriff of Norwich in 1451, 1452, and 1459.

⁴ Henry Wilton was returned with J. Jenney, 1477.

⁵ This must refer to the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster.

⁶ This estate came afterwards by purchase to the Greshams, and here it was that, in 1549, Sir Thomas

Gresham, knight, founder of the Royal Exchange, entertained John Dudley, the great Earl of Warwick, when he marched into Norfolk to attack Ket the rebel tanner.

⁷ Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

⁸ Henry Stanhope, Lord Cromwell.

⁹ [Fenn translates this *battle*; but he should have said *disastrous battle* to render the French *mal journée*. Indeed *journée* is used precisely like our day: we say the glorious day of Waterloo, the disastrous day at Fontenoy.]

insomuch as the Earl of Shrewsbury¹ hath lodged him at the hospital of St. James² beside the Mews,³ by the Lord Cromwell's desire, for his safeguard.

And also all my Lord of Warwick's men, my Lord of York's men, and also my Lord of Salisbury's men, go with harness, and in harness, with strange weapons; and have stuffed their lords' barges full of weapons daily unto Westminster. And the day of making of this letter there was a proclamation made in the Chancery on the king's behalf, that no man should neither bear weapon nor wear harness defensible, &c.

Also the day afore the making of this letter there passed a bill both by the king, lords, and commons, putting Thorp, Joseph, and my Lord of Somerset in all the default; by the which bill, all manner of actions that should grow to any person or persons, for any offences at that journey done, in any manner of wise, should be extinct and void, affirming

all things done there well done; and nothing done there never after this time to be spoken of; to the which bill many a man grudging full sore now it is passed.

And if I might be recommended unto my special master and yours, with all lowliness and true service, I beseech you heartily as I can.

And also to my brethren Th. Upton, Lodowick of Pole, William Lynd Calyn (*Lincoln*), and John Marshall.

No more, but our lord have you both in his perpetual keeping.

Written at London on St. Margaret's even in haste; and after this is read and understood, I pray you burn or break (*tear*) it, for I am loath to write anything of any lord, but I must needs, there is nothing else to write. Amen.

YOUR OWN HENRY WINDSOR.

London, Sunday, St. Margaret's day,
20th of July, 1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXV.—(LXI. vol. iii. p. 245.)

On the back of this letter in an ancient hand is written, "The Copie of Thearles of Warr and Salisbur I're whereby appere The Suspected Life of Tuden'h'm Heydon and others." The persons here mentioned were steady Lancastrians, and I suppose immediately after the battle of St. Alban's, fought in May, applied to the Yorkists for that protection which here seems to have been granted to them. This protection appears, however, to have given offence to some of their own party, and therefore these directors of the king and government now found it necessary to qualify the terms granted by them to those in the opposite interest. These protections were certainly prudent, and showed that these noblemen well understood the best methods of drawing over those in the contrary party to their side. [While the Yorkists were in power no acts of vengeance were committed or allowed. It was thought the Lancastrians had suffered sufficiently in the loss of so many of their leaders in the battle, and the avowed principle of the Earl of Warwick was to spare the lower and middle classes as much as possible, and to select as victims only the nobility and higher classes, both in the battle-field and the justice-courts.]

The Earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury.

RIGHT well beloved, we greet you well, and where⁴ for the tender love that we have to the conservation of the king's peace, laws, and justice, in this his realm of England, we have commanded the king's people in his name,

by our letters and divers writings, that no man should rob or despoil Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, John Heydon, John Wyndham, Harry Todenham, and John Andrews, and others, which have sued to us for our said letters; we, willing to eschew that any person should have colour by our said letters to noise us, or any of us, that the said Sir Thomas, John Heydon, John Wyndham, Harry, and John Andrews, or any other of suspected fame be accorded with us, or any of us, for such wrongs as they or any of them have done to us, our servants, and tenants, or well-willers, or that we should have them in tenderness or favour to discourage true peo-

¹ John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, (son of the famous General John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,) was lord treasurer in 1456, and fell in the battle of Northampton, in 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

² Now St. James's Palace.

³ [A place for the keeping of hawks, afterwards the royal stables, and the site of which is now occupied by the barracks of the foot-guards, behind the National Gallery at Charing Cross.]

⁴ [Whereas the use of the word is frequent.]

ple to sue against them by the law; we therefore notify to you, as we will that it be notified to all people, that we, nor none of us, intend not to favour or tender them, or any other of suspected fame, but rather to correct such by the law, for we made our said letters solely for keeping of the peace and justice, and not for favour of suspected conditions.

And the Holy Trinity keep you. Written at London, the 23rd day of July.

To all Mayors, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, Constables, and all the King's Officers and Ministers in Norfolk, and each one of them.

London, Wednesday, 23rd of July,
1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXVI.—(LXII. vol. iii. p. 247.)

At the bottom of this letter is written in a hand of the time, "Litt. direct. Johi Paston ltr Michēm xxxiiij & xxxiiij Henr. sexti.," which ascertains the date. This letter contains nothing of any importance, but being written by a learned prelate, I thought it proper to insert it. John Chadworth was the second provost of King's College, in Cambridge, and succeeded to the see of Lincoln in 1452, soon after which he was joined in commission with William Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, for reforming the statutes of both the colleges built by King Henry VI. at Eton and Cambridge. He died in 1471.

To the worshipful and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire.

RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved Sir, I commend me unto you, and with all my heart thank you for the great labours that ye of times have diligently done for my well-beloved servant John Ode, to the intent that he should mowe (*be able to*) attain to enter and enjoy peaceably his inheritance, as I am informed due unto him; and pray you of your good continuance, certifying you that I have written unto Yelverton the justice, that he would at some seasonable time commune with Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, and to offer him as much reason as it shall be thought unto him and to you that law will in that behalf require, praying you that ye will commune with the said Yelverton, and to conceive betwixt you such lawful means of guiding of this matter that my said servant may have peaceably without great trouble his said inheritance, as I shall in case semblable (*similar*) do my labour unto your pleasure (*pleasure*). And pray you that of the disposition of the said Sir Thomas Todenham in

this behalf I may be certified; and Jesu preserve you. Written at London, the 26th day of July.

London,
26th of July, 1455.
33 H. VI.

J. Bishop of Lincoln.

LETTER LXXXVII.—(LXIII. vol. iii. p. 249.)

On the back of this letter is the following memorandum in an ancient hand: "A Copie of the Duke of N. Lre wh^{ch} sheweth y^t notable injuries wer comytted by the L. Scales and his adherents." This letter was written at a time when the king was under the direction of the Duke of York's party, about the year 1455, as it accuses the friends of the House of Lancaster of being guilty of riots and outrageous offences. It fairly shows the behaviour of the victorious party to those in the opposite interest, and speaks the language of those who had the king in their power. John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, died in 1461. For his curious Autograph see Letter xxxvii. From such orders as these, issued by the great men, we can judge better of the transactions of these turbulent times than from any regular history extant. [It appears to us, on the contrary, that this letter or notice displays remarkable moderation, and consequently a desire

for peace and justice only. Indeed, it is extraordinary how small an effect the contests of the rival houses appear to have produced on the domestic and social affairs of the time, as is proved by these as well as all other contemporaneous documents referring to private life, a clear proof that the war was carried on on both sides without any wanton or unnecessary cruelties, and on higher principles than merely factious or self-interested motives. The great mischief that was occasioned by these civil wars was the diverting of the energies of the people into an unproductive and wasteful course, unless the securing so high a degree of civil liberty as we attained to during and immediately after them, and which was a consequence of these contests, should be considered a sufficient recompense.]

The Duke of Norfolk.

BE it known to all the king's true liege people, the cause of our coming into this country is, by the commandment of the king our sovereign lord, for to inquire of such great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts, as his highness is credibly informed be done in this country, and to know in certain, by you that know the truth, by what person or persons the said great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts be done; wherefore we charge you all, on the king's behalf our sovereign lord, that ye spare neither for love, dread, nor fear that ye have to any person of what estate, degree, or condition he be, but that ye say the soth (*truth*) by whom such offences be done, and that ye spare no man that ye know guilty, and, by the faith that we owe to our sovereign lord, they shall be chastised after their desert, and it reformed as law requireth.

Also it is openly published that certain servants of the Lord Scales should in his name menace and put men in fear and dread to complain to us at this time of the said hurts and griefs, saying that we would abide but a short time here, and after our departing he would have the rule and governance as he hath had afore time. We let you weet that next the king our sovereign lord, by his good grace and licence, we will have the principal

rule and governance through all this shire, of which we bear our name, while that we be living, as far as reason and law requireth, whosoever will grudge or say the contrary; for we will that the Lord Scales, Sir Thomas Todenham, Sir Miles Stapylton, and John Heydon have in knowledge, though our person be not daily here, they shall find our power here at all times to do the king our sovereign lord service, and to support and maintain you all in your right that be the king's true liege men; for it may not be said nay, but that here hath been the greatest riots, horrible wrongs, and offences done in these parts by the said Lord Scales, Thomas Todenham, Miles Stapylton, John Heydon, and such as be confederated unto them, that ever was seen in our days; and most mischief through their malicious purpose like to have fallen among the king's true liege people now late at Norwich, ne had we (*had we not*) better provided therefore; and also that God fortun'd us to withstand their said malicious and evil disposed purpose.

Wherefore make bills of your grievance and come to us, and we shall bring you to the king's presence ourself, whose presence will be here in all the haste with the mercy of God, and see the reformation there of his own person.

LETTER LXXXVIII.—(XXVII. vol. i. p. 115.)

This letter seems to have been written on the 28th of October, 1455, as from the latter part of it (though imperfect) it appears that the king was at Hertford; reported to be sick again; and under the direction of the Lords of York, Warwick, and Salisbury, &c. All which agrees with our historical accounts of this period. We see in this letter a strong and diabolical instance of party fury; an old and an infirm man is, in the night, by a stratagem, enticed to open his gates; his place is robbed and plundered, and himself, after various ill treatment, is most cruelly murdered, by the direction of the son and heir of a nobleman then at variance with Lord Bonville. [Scarcely, we think, of "party fury." Bonville and Devonshire were both at that time Yorkists, for Devoushire did not openly go over to the Lancastrians till a little before the battle of Towton in 1461, where he first appeared in arms on their side.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Norwich, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your mastership to weet (*here follows an account of some law business, &c.*)

Here be many marvellous tales of things that shall fall this next month, as it is said; for

it is talked that one Doctor Grene a priest hath kalked (*calculated*), and reporteth that before St. Andrew's day next coming shall be the greatest battle that was since the battle of Shrewsbury,¹ and it shall fall between the Bishop's Inn of Salisbury² and Westminster Bars; and there shall die seven lords, whereof three should be bishops. All this and much more is talked and reported. I trust to God it shall not fall so!

Also there is great variance between the Earl of Devonshire³ and the Lord Bonville,⁴ as hath been many day, and much debate is like to grow thereby; for on Thursday (23rd of October) at night last passed, the Earl of Devonshire's son and heir⁵ came, with sixty men of arms, to Radford's Place⁶ in Devonshire, which was of counsel with my Lord Bonville; and they set an house on fire at Radford's gate, and cried and made a noise as though they had been sorry for the fire; and by that cause Radford's men set open the gates and yede (*went*) out to see the fire; and forthwith the Earl's son aforesaid entered into the place, and entreated Radford to come down of his chamber to speak with them, promising him that he should no bodily harm have; upon which promise he came down, and spoke with the said Earl's son: in the mean time his

meny (*servants*) rob his chamber, and rifled his hutches,⁷ and trussed such as they could get together and carried it away on his own horses: then the Earl's son said,—“Radford, thou must come to my lord, my father.” He said he would, and bade one of his men make ready his horse to ride with them; which answered him that all his horses were taken away: then he said to the Earl's son, “Sir, your men have robbed my chamber, and they have mine horses, that I may not ride with you to my lord your father, wherefore I pray you let me ride, for I am old, and may not go.”

It was answered him again that he should walk forth with them on his feet; and so he did till he was a flight⁸ shot or more from his place, and then he was⁹. softly, for cause he might not go fast, and when they were thus departed he turned forthwith came nine men again upon him and smote him on the head and felled of them cut his throat.

This was told to my Lord Chancellor this forenoon messengers, as come of purpose out of the same country. This matter is taken greatly passed at two after midnight rode out of London as it is said more than the best wise. Some say it was to ride toward my Lord of York, and some so much rumour is here, what it meaneth I wot not, God turn it at Hertford,¹⁰ and some men are afraid that he is sick again, I pray God my Lords of York, Warwick, Salisbury, and others are in purpose to convey him &c.

The said Nicholas Crome, bearer hereof, shall tell you such tidings in haste at London on Saint Simon's day and Jude.

Your poor JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Tuesday, 28th of October,
1455. 34 H. VI.

⁷ Huche, French, a coffer or chest standing upon legs.

⁸ A flight was a particular kind of arrow called *flecta*, in the Latin of the middle ages.

⁹ Where the lines are supplied with dots the original letter is imperfect, from a part being decayed and torn off.

¹⁰ The king seems at the time this letter was written to have been at Hertford, and it was reported that he was sick again.

¹ The battle of Shrewsbury was fought on the 22nd of July, 1403, 4 H. IV. the Percies being the leaders of the malcontents, who were routed by the king's army. The predictions, however, of Dr. Grene were not fulfilled, but prophecies, in this credulous age, had great influence over the minds of the people; and there having been already some civil contests, they were easily induced to believe that others might be foreseen and foretold.

² [The “Bishoppes Inne of Salesbury” was situated in the Strand, where Salisbury Street is now. Westminster Bars was probably the city of London gates towards Westminster, as Westminster itself was never walled.]

³ Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded by order of Edward IV. immediately after the battle of Towton, in 1461.

⁴ William Bonville was created Lord Bonville in 1449, and was beheaded, by order of Queen Margaret, after the battle at Barnard's Heath, near St. Alban's, in February, 1460-1, though he had staid with Henry VI. on a promise of safety.

⁵ Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded very soon after his father, in 1461.

⁶ Nicholas Radford was an eminent lawyer, and resided at Pophill, near Kyrton.

LETTER LXXXIX.—(LXIV. vol. iii. p. 253.)

[From this letter it would appear the London Road had not a good country reputation for security. The most curious circumstance, however, is, that neither in Norwich nor in all Suffolk was there to be procured a sufficient quantity of cloth of a required colour for the male retainers of a private gentleman's family.] Of the liveries Sir John Fenn says:—"A very ingenious and learned friend of mine has suggested to me that the honourable and ancient families of this land were formerly guided in the colours of their liveries by the metals and colours in which their arms were blazoned; his suggestion is here verified, for the arms of Paston were, argent, six fleurs de lys azure, and a chief indented or: if therefore russet or grey may be equivalent to argent, the murrey and the blue are the identical or and azure of the arms.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you, pleaseth you to weet that mine aunt Moundford¹ hath desired me to write to you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to cheyise (*provide*) for her at London twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) for to be paid to Master Ponynge,² either on Saturday or Sunday, which shall be St. Andrew's day, in discharging of them that be bounden to Master Ponynge of the said twenty marks for the wardship³ of her daughter, the which twenty marks she hath delivered to me in gold for you to have at your coming home, for she dare not adventure her money to be brought up to London for fear of robbing, for it is said here that there goeth many thieves betwixt this and London, which causeth her to beseech you to content the said money in discharging of the matter and of them that be bounden, for she would for no good that the day were broken; and she thanketh you heartily for the great labour and business that ye have had in that matter, and in all others touching her and hers, wherefore she saith she is ever bounden to be your beadswoman,⁴ and ever will be while she liveth.

My cousin, her son, and his wife recommendeth them unto you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to be their good

master, as ye have been aforetime; for they be informed that Daniel is come to Rising Castle, and his men make their boast that their master shall be again at Brayston within short time.

Furthermore, as for the matter that my son wrote to me for the box whereon was written *False Carte Sproute*, that I should inquire of William Worcester where it were; the said William was not at home since that I had his letter, but as soon as he cometh home I shall inquire of him, and send you an answer.

As touching for your liveries, there can none be gotten here of that colour that ye would have of, neither murrey, nor blue, nor good russet, underneath 3*s.* the yard at the lowest price, and yet is there not enough of one cloth and colour to serve you: and as for to be purveyed in Suffolk, it will not be purveyed not now against the time, without they had had warning at Michaelmas, as I am informed: and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on St. Katherine's day.

By your

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, 25th of November,
1455, or 1460. 34 or 39 H.

N. B. St. Andrew's day fell on a Sunday, in the years 1455 and 1460; this letter was therefore most probably written in one of these years.

LETTER XC.—(LXV. vol. iii. p. 357.)

[This letter is from W. Botoner, (Worcester) to John Paston, and contains nothing of interest. The principal matter is that Sir

John Fastolf is desirous of making his will, and he, Botoner, is desirous that Paston should be present.]

¹ Osbert Moundford, Esq., of Hockwold, married Elizabeth, daughter of John Berney, Esq., and by her had Mary, their daughter and sole heir, who married Sir William Tindale, Knight of the Bath.

² [Frequently spelt Poynings.]

³ [The statute of wardship, a most oppressive and unjust law, was abolished by the 12th Chas. II.]

⁴ A beadsman or beadswoman was a person employed in praying, though generally in praying for another.

LETTER XCI.—(XXVIII. vol. i. p. 121.)

To the worshipful Sir, and my right well-beloved cousin John Paston, and in his absence to John Bocking, or William Barker.

WORSHIPFUL Sir and cousin, I recommend me to you, and like you to weet that I have a tally¹ with my cousin Fenn² of 500 marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and more, for to be changed upon such places as a man might have most speedy payment; and I pray you heartily to commune with the said Fenn, that I might be ensured of the said tally to be exchanged, and for what reward competent to be given upon the same I will [*shall or should*] agree to it.

Item, I desire to know who be the residue, the remanent, of the co-executors of the Lord Willoughby,³ now the Lord Cromwell⁴ is deceased; for this cause it was so, that there

¹ A taille or tally was a cleft stick, both parts of which were notched according to the sum of money advanced, and of which one part was given to the creditor, whilst the other remained with the debtor. Hence the tallier of the Exchequer, now called the teller. Sir John Fastolf had entrusted a tally with his cousin Fenn, and was desirous of knowing what reasonable discount he should allow for receiving ready money upon this security.

² Hugh Fenne, of Yorkshire, was slain in battle during the contest between Richard II. and Henry IV. about 1399, when he forfeited his lands. His son Hugh had estates in Essex and Middlesex, where his descendants flourished for several generations: this family then branched off into Suffolk and Norfolk, in both which counties they acquired possessions. The person mentioned in this letter was either the son or grandson (for they were both named Hugh.) of the Hugh Fenne, of Yorkshire, and seems, from the manner in which he is several times mentioned both by Sir J. Fastolf and J. Paston, to have been a lawyer. He was, in 1459, a supervisor of Sir J. Fastolf's will. [This Fenn was the ancestor of Sir John Fenn, the original editor of these letters. Leaving only a daughter: the family name became extinct in Norfolk on the death of Sir John.]

³ Robert Willoughby, Lord Willoughby, an eminent commander, was present at the famous battle of Agincourt, in 1415; and also commanded under the Duke of Bedford at the battle of Verneuil, in the province of Normandy, in 1424, where he and Sir John Fastolf had the honour of taking the Duke of Alençon prisoner, as appears by this letter. The writers of Sir J. Fastolf's life in the 'Biographia Britannica' give an account of his having taken a French general, but are in doubt both as to the person taken, and likewise in what engagement.

⁴ Henry Lord Cromwell, whose sister, and now co-heir, Lord Willoughby had married. She was at this time the wife of Sir Thomas Nevile.

was due to the Lord Willoughby and to me 10,000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for a reward to be paid of my Lord Bedford's⁵ goods, for the taking of the Duke of Alençon.⁶

And the said Lord Willoughby had but 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) paid, and I 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) so 8000 (5333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) leaveth (*remaineth*) yet to pay; of which sum, 4000 (2666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) must grow to the executors of the said Lord Willoughby to dispose.

And therefore I desire that the executors, and such as most have interest in the Lord Willoughby's goods, may be communed with; that they may make pursuit for payment of the said 4000 marks, for his part to be had, and I shall make for my part.

And (if) Master Nevile, the which hath wedded my Lady Willoughby, have power or interest to receive the Lord Willoughby's debts, then he to be laboured unto. And my Lord of Salisbury⁷ will be a great helper in this cause.

The king, which is supervisor of my Lord Bedford's testament, hath written and commanded by sundry letters that the said Lord Willoughby should be content for his part; and so much the matter is the forwarder.

⁵ John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, and Regent of France, third son of Henry IV. This great man died at Paris, in 1435, and was buried at Rouen. It may be supposed that the ransom was paid into his hands as commander-in-chief, and that, in that character, he was entitled to a considerable share of it, though it appears from this account that he had detained most of it; for even now, at the distance of twenty years from his death, the Lord Willoughby and Sir J. Fastolf had received only 1000 marks each.

⁶ John II. Duke of Alençon, son of him slain at Agincourt, was born in 1409, and taken prisoner at the battle of Verneuil, in 1424. He was detained a prisoner three years, but released at the intercession of the Duke of Burgundy, on paying a ransom of 200,000 crowns. He afterwards was convicted of treasons towards his own sovereigns, and died in prison in 1476.

⁷ Richard Nevile Earl of Salisbury, married Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Montague, the great Earl of Salisbury, who had the principal command under the Duke of Bedford at Verneuil, and who died in 1428.

And there is one Young, a servant of the Lord Willoughby, which pursued this matter; if he were in London he could give good information upon this matter.

I pray you write to me how my matters do, and of such novelties as ye have there, and our Lord have you in his keeping.

Written at Caister hastily, the 5th day of February, in the 34th year of King Henry Vith.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
Wednesday,
5th of February, 1454. . 34 H. VI.

NUMBER XCII.—(LXVI. vol. iii. p. 261.)

As there are not only several letters in this collection of the hand-writing of that renowned warrior Sir John Fastolf, but as he is likewise mentioned in many others, I thought the two following statements of sums of money due to him from the crown would be acceptable to the reader, as they ascertain several of his enterprises in France, and point out to us the two prisoners which he took in the French wars, and who, by the large sums agreed to be paid for their ransom, must have been persons of great consequence in the military line. This first declaration relates to money due to him on the account of the wars and transactions both in England and in France. The second states the injuries and losses which he had sustained in France. There is no date to either of them, but from the mention of the time since his last return from France, and which, from an account of his life, appears to have been in the year 1440, these representations were made in the year 1455. 33 H. VI.

Billa de debitis Regis in partibus Franciæ Johanni Fastolf, militi, debitis.

THESE be the injuries, losses, and damages that the said Fastolf hath had, as well within the realm of England as in other parts in manner and form as it ensueth :—

First, it is to consider how that the said Fastolf hath been vexed and troubled since he came last into this land by the might and power of the Duke of Suffolk,¹ and by the labour of his counsel and servants in divers wise, as in great oppressions, grievous and outrageous ameracements, and many great horrible extortions, as it may appear more plainly by a roll of articles thereupon made, the damages of which extend to the sum of 5000 marks. . = 3333 6 8

Item, the said Fastolf hath been greatly damaged and hurt by the might and power of the said Duke of Suffolk and his counsel, in disseising and taking away a manor of the said Fastolf's, called Dedham, in the county of Essex, to the value

of 100 marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of yearly rent, which was holden from the said Fastolf by the term of three year day and more, to his great hurt, with 200 marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) in costs expended in recovery of the same, the sum in all . . . 500 marks = 333 6 8

Item, there is cast into the king's hands by untrue forged offices and inquisitions, supposed to be found by divers escheators in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, three certain manors of the said Fastolf, to the value of 100 marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) yearly, which said offices and inquisitions were never duly found, but forged by untrue imaginations, and means of certain persons his evil willers, as it hath been confessed by those that were appointed and named to be upon the inquests. And by the malicious labour of his said evil willers, the said manors have been troubled and put in plea this four year day and more, to the damage and

¹ Many of the letters in this collection mention the disputes between the Duke of Suffolk and Sir John Fastolf concerning different manors and estates.

costs of the said Fastolf, the
sum of 500 marks . . . = £. s. d.
333 6 8

Item, the said Fastolf having
the gift of the baronies and
lordship of Sillie Guill'm¹
and Lasuze, in the county of
Mayne, to him and to his assigns
for ever, the which were gotten
by the said Fastolf, and no
charge to the king, for the
value and denomberment (*num-
ber*) of 4000 saluts² of yearly
rent, he was commanded by
the king's letters to deliver up
the said baronies and lordship
to the king's commissioners,
promising him by the king's
commandment to be recom-
pensed therefore, as the said
Fastolf hath to show, and he
not recompensed nor rewarded
nothing for the leaving of his
said baronies and lordship, to
the damages of the said Fastolf
of the sum of 2500 marks = 1666 13 4

Item, whereas the said Fas-
tolf had a prisoner of his own
taking, called Guill'm Rem-
ond,³ which was ransomed,
and agreed to pay him for
his ransom with the marks the
sum of 3200 saluts, the pri-
soner, without knowledge or
licence of the said Fastolf, was
taken away from him by the
Duke of Bedford, then being
the king's regent of France,
and with the said prisoner he
caused the town of Compeyn,
then lying in the French party's
governance, for to be yielded
to the king, and to his said
regent in his name; and the
said Fastolf, after long pursuits
made to the king and his

council, was recompensed but
to the value of 1600 saluts in
lands in Normandy, when they
fortuned to fall into the king's
hands, which lands he hath
also lost; and also the said
Fastolf hath lost the residue of
the said ransom, besides the
said lands, to the sum of 4000
marks = 2666 13 4

Item, the said Fastolf is yet
owing for his portion and part
for the recompense and reward
that should grow and be due
to him for the taking of John,
calling himself Duke of Alan-
çon, at the battle of Verneuil,⁴
which that paid for his ransom
40,000 marks (26,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*)
which reward, beside the Lord
Willoughby's part, should ex-
tend to the sum of 4000 marks = 2666 13 4

Item, is due to the said Fas-
tolf, by the execution of the
last will and testament of John
Duke of Bedford,⁵ whose soul
God assoil! for prests and other
charges for safeguard and keep-
ing of certain fortresses, cas-
tles, and towns, and for other
costs, prests, and charges by
him borne in his service, as
it may appear in certain ar-
ticles written in a roll par-
ticularly of the same, the sum
of . 4599 marks 5*s.* 6*d.* = 3066 3 6

Sum total

21,099 marks 5*s.* 6*d.* = 14066 5 6

Item, since the last coming⁶ over of the
said Fastolf into this realm, as by the space of
fifteen years and more, he hath borne great
costs, charges, and expenses, at all times
attending upon the king's highness, and the
lords of his council, as he hath had in com-
mandment, and was his part to do, for the
which, and for all the service that he hath

¹ Sir John took the castle of Sillie le Guillem in 1425, and from which he was dignified with the title of baron.

² The salute was a gold coin of Henry VI., current in France for 1*l.* 5*s.* English.

³ In 1423 he took the castle of Paey, the governor whereof was Guillaume Remond.

⁴ This battle was fought in 1424.

⁵ See previous letter of Sir J. Fastolf's.

⁶ Sir John finally left France in 1440, this account therefore was drawn up in 1455. 33 H. VI.

done to the right noble prince King Harry the IVth. aieul (*grandfather*) to our sovereign lord that now is, and to the most victorious prince and king his father, whose souls God assoil, and also to our said sovereign lord, he hath had neither fee, wages, reward, nor recompense in this his realm of England, but hath borne it of his own proper goods at all

times to the king's honour and profit, as to his power, which is to him right grievous and chargeable, trusting to have been considered and rewarded as other men of such deserving have been in the times of the right noble progenitors of our said sovereign lords late kings of this said realm.

1455. 33 H. VI.

NUMBER XCIII.—(LXVII. vol. iii. p. 269.)

A declaration of the costs which Sir John Fastolf was at, being without this realm.

THE declaration of certain prests, (*loans*) costs, and charges, done and borne by Sir John Fastolf, as well in the time of the most noble and victorious princes of blessed memory, King Harry the IVth., King Harry the Vth., as in the time of our sovereign lord king that now is, in his wars beyond the sea, as by the articles that follow more plainly appeareth.

First, it is to be remembered that to the said Fastolf is owing for divers costs and charges by him borne for the time that he occupied the office of the constabulary of Bourdeaux, for the safeguard of the king's duchy of Guienne, as it appeareth plainly by account made of the said office of constabulary remaining in the king's exchequer at Westminster of record, whereof he yet neither had payment nor assignment, the sum of . . .

£. s. d.

227 15 3½

Item, in like wise there is owing to the said Fastolf for wages for his service done to the king, and to the Duke of Clarence, being the king's lieutenant in the said duchy of Guienne, as it may appear under sufficient writing, the sum of . . .

202 10 0

Item, in like wise is owing to the said Fastolf for costs and charges that he bare when he was lieutenant of the town of

Hartleur,¹ in Normandy, as it sheweth by a debenture made to the said Fastolf with him remaining. . . .

£. s. d.

133 6 8

Item, in like wise is owing to the said Fastolf for the keeping and victualling of the Bastile² of St. Anthony in Paris, as it appeareth by writing sufficient, and by the creditors of Sir John Tyrel,³ knight, late treasurer of the king's house, remaining in the exchequer of Westminster of record, the sum of . . .

42 0 0

Item, there is owing to the said Fastolf for the safeguard of the town of Pount Melank⁴ in the parts of France, as it appeareth by account thereof, made in the king's exchequer of England of record, the sum of . . .

89 10 4¾

Sum mⁱ xliij marks ix sh. i farthing.

And in semblable wise over all this is owing to the said Fastolf for prests and wages of him and his retinues being in the king's service, in his

¹ Sir John Fastolf was lieutenant of Hartleur in 1415.

² The foundation of this since terrible prison was laid by Hugh Aubriot on the 22nd of April, 1369, 43 of our King Edward III. and the 6th of Charles V. of France.

³ He was grandfather to Sir James Tyrel, the supposed murderer of Edward V. and his brother.

⁴ Port Meulent was taken in 1422.

realm of France, and duchy of Normandy,¹ as well about the safeguard and governance of his towns, castles, and fortresses of Alençon, Fresney le Vicomte, Verneuil, Honnefleete,² as for other great causes and charges borne and paid in the king our sovereign lord's days that now is, for the advancement of his conquest, the good and utility of him, of his said realm and duchy aforesaid, as it appeareth openly by ac-

£. s. d.

counts made in the Chamber of Accounts of Paris and Roan, whereof the vidimus remain with the said Fastolf, and also by certain debentures containing the said sums, ready to show, whereof the said Fastolf hitherto hath had neither payment nor assignation,

The sum of v m^l iiij^{xx} ij marks xiiij sh. iiij^d ob. sterling = 3388 13 3½
Sum total vj m^l cxxv marks, ix sh. iiij. farthings sterling = 4083 15 7¾
1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER XCIV.—(XXIX. vol. i. p. 125.)

This letter is written by the secretary, and concluded and subscribed by the hand of that great prelate, cardinal, and lord chancellor, Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury; who is recorded to have been a principal means of introducing the art of printing into England. He was elected archbishop in 1454. 32 H. VI. was a man of considerable learning, and died in 1486. 2 H. VII. at an advanced age.

To the right worshipful, and my right entirely well-beloved Sir John Fastolf, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful, and my right entirely well beloved, I greet you right heartily well; thanking you specially, and in full hearty wise, for the very gentle goodness that ye showed unto me at all times, praying you of good continuance.

And as touching such matters as ye sent unto me for, I trust to God verily, inasmuch as the rule³ is amended here, and the weather waxeth seasonable and pleasant, to see you in these parts within short time; at which time I shall commune and demean unto you [*act towards you*] in such wise that ye shall be right well pleased.

And as for the matter concerning my Lord

of Bedford,⁴ think it not contrary but that ye shall find me heartily well-willed to do that I can or may for the accomplishment of your desire, as well in that matter as in other like, as your servant John Bocking, bearer hereof, can clearer report unto you on my behalf, to whom like it you to give faith and credence in this part; and the blessed Trinity have you everlastingly in his keeping.

Written in my manor of Lamethith (*Lambeth*) the 27th day of March.

Your faithful and true,

THOMAS CANT.

Lambeth, 27th of March,
between 1454, and 1459. 33 and 37 H. VI.

¹ Sir John was several years governor of Normandy, I believe from about 1427 to 1440, when he left France.

² [So in original; Fenn gives it in the form of Honnefleete, having previously given "Fresney, Le Vicounte" as two places. There is little doubt of the place meant being Honfleur, at the mouth of the Seine, opposite Harfleur.]

³ This may apply either to some change in the

administration, or only in the management of the house.

⁴ There was no Duke of Bedford between 1435 and 1470. This must therefore relate to some matter which had formerly passed between Sir John Fastolf and John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, and Regent of France, who died in 1435; perhaps it related to the ransom of the Duke of Alençon. Sir John served long under him in France.

LETTER XCV.—(LXVIII. vol. iii. p. 277.)

This letter was most probably written during the time that the archbishop was lord chancellor, and it may be supposed that this Robert Offord had been tried and acquitted upon an indictment for the murder, and that, now the next of kin to the deceased, not being satisfied with the verdict, had lodged his appeal.

To our right trusty and right well-beloved John Paston, Esq., and William Norwich, and to either of them.

RIGHT trusty and right well beloved, we greet you heartily well; and whereas Sir Nichol Bowet, kut., sueth an appeal in the county of Norfolk against one Robert Offord of Barking, for the death of one Sir Henry Bowet, clerk; we, being informed that the matter is piteous, pray you heartily that ye will in our behalf move and entreat the sheriff of the said county to surcease of the execution of any process upon the exigent¹ to him directed in that behalf unto the next term, so that reasonable means may be found to

save the said Robert harmless; letting him weet that we have written to the said Sir Nichol for a convenient treaty to be taken in that behalf, as shall be thought according to right. And God have you ever in his keeping.

Written in our manor of Mortlake, the 7th day of September.

T. { ARCHBISHOP
OF CANTERBURY.²

Mortlake, in Surry, 7th of September,
between 1455 and 1458. 34 and 37 H. VI.

LETTER XCVI.—(LXIX. vol. iii. p. 279.)

This letter has no direction, and is only subscribed with the initials H. W.; from the hand-writing, however, it appears to have been written by Henry Windsor, and by the contents we may discover it was addressed to J. Paston. The character he gives of his master, Sir John Fastolf, is not a very pleasing one, and from his saying that whatever is done will "be called your dede," it appears to have been sent to J. Paston in the latter part of Sir John Fastolf's life, when his cousin Paston transacted most of his business. [But it evidently appears that H. W. was more anxious to avoid publicity for his own sake than for either his master or Paston. The letter is very obscurely expressed, probably on purpose.]

AFTER humble and due recommendation, please it your good mastership to understand that at making of this my poor letter, there were no novelties with us but such as ye understood full well afore your departing, except the king will into Scotland in all manner wise of war, and that my Lord of Wiltshire shall be made chancellor. I suppose the better³ is but a slander, and therefore be ye advised how ye deliver them as tidings.

Also I weet full well where I left you in such matters as it pleased you to make me of your counsel, as touching one matter specially, and how that ye said unto me, when I desired your good mastership to show favour, such as ye best might if anything should be showed ad lumen, my master F. (*Fastolf*) except, and how that ye answered and said,

as it pleased you, that I was conquered, in truth that should prove but a full great unstableness in me, with more, &c. But, Sir, I pray you, howsoever my master reckoneth with any of his servants, bring not the matter in revolution in the open court, for and (*if*) it were once opened before the judges how that any letters patent should be purchased of an ante date, and the default found in me, ye woul be a thousand times advised, and my master F. (*Fastolf*) both, ere that ye would amend me so much as I should be appered (*impaired*) thereby; and therefore I beseech you be well advised how that matter be opened for my ease.

I was not desired to write unto you of no one person, so God be my help, yourself except; but I would ye would take advice and counsel of the priest that had you so

¹ The exigent is a writ requiring the appearance of the party, and if he come not at the last proclamation he is outlawed.

² Thomas Bouchier, Abp. of Canterbury, from 1454 to 1456, and Lord Chancellor from 1455 to 1457.

³ [A mistake apparently for *latter* or *letter*.]

long under hands on Shor Thursday,¹ when I and my fellowship, God thank you, had of you right great cheer to our great comfort and your great cost, how that the same priest understandeth this letter of the gospel under written, "Jesús dixit Simoni Petro, si peccavit in te frater tuus, vade et corripe eum inter te et ipsum solum; si te audierit lucratus es fratrem tuum, si autem te non audierit adhibe tecum adhuc unum vel duos, ut in ore duorum vel trium testium stet omne verbum. Quod si non audierit, dic ecclesiæ, si autem ecclesiæ non audierit sit tibi sicut ethnicus et publicanus,"² &c. And in another place "Tunc accedens Petrus ad Jesum dixit, Domine, quotiens petevit (*quoties peccabit*) in me frater meus, dimittam ei usque septies? Dicti illi Jesu, non dico tibi usque septies, sed usque septuagesies septies."³

My master can do nothing, the which shall come in open audience at these days, but it shall be called your deed, and it is not unknown that cruel and vengible (*vengeful*) he hath been ever, and for the most part

without pity and mercy, I can no more, but "vade et corripe eum," for truly he cannot bring about his matters in this word (*world*) for the word (*world*) is not for him; I suppose it will not change yet by likeness, but I beseech you, Sir, help not to amend him only, but every other man, if ye know any more misdisposed.

I can no more, but as I can or may shall be his servant and yours unto such time as ye will command me to surcease and leave off, if it please him.

Sir, I pray you take this copy of your statute, it is not examined by me, for I found it these five years passed.

Written in my sleeping time,⁴ at afternoon, on Whitsunday. Also, Sir, if I have rehearsed wittingly the text of the gospel singularly unto your mastership, I beseech you to be had excused.

Your own H. W.

Whitsunday, May or June,
between 1455 and 1459.
33 and 38 H. VI.

LETTER XCVII.—(XXX. vol. i. p. 129.)

This letter, though it contains no historical or memorable event, exhibits the dutiful style of a son to a father [in law], and on that account deserves to be read; it was written between 1455, when John succeeded his father William as Lord Lovell, and 1460, when Lord Beaumont was slain. John Lord Lovell married Jane, daughter of Viscount Beaumont, and at length heir to her brothers William and Henry, who both succeeded to the title, but died without issue. Lord Lovell died in 1464, leaving his son and heir, Francis Lord Lovell, who was Lord Chamberlain to King Richard III., and attended him at the battle of Bosworth field.

To my right worshipful, and my most best-beloved lord father, my Lord Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful, and my most best-beloved lord father, I recommend me unto your good lordship; please it you to weet, I have conceived your writing right well, and forasmuch as ye desire the stewardship of Bagge-worth for your well-beloved Thomas Everingham, which I trow verily be right a good and a faithful gentleman. Howbeit, my lord your desire shall be had in all that is in me; and at the instance of your lordship, I, by

the advice of my council, shall give it him in writing, under such form as shall please you; wherein I would be glad to do that that might please your good lordship, praying you right heartily ye would be mine especial good lord and father in all such as ye can think should grow to my worship or profit in any wise, as my singular trust is

¹ Shere or Shore Thursday, Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday.

² St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xviii. v. 15, 16, 17, and v. 21, 22.

³ This relates to papers sent with this letter, and accounts for there being no direction, as the whole was enclosed in a parcel.

⁴ We are here made acquainted with the custom of H. Windsor, of sleeping after dinner at afternoon; perhaps as the hours of rising were early, it might be usual for people in general to do so, as it is still practised in the families of many early rising farmers, &c. [This guess does not appear very probable; nor, we think, is the practice much known among farmers. "Sleeping time" is more likely to have been here used as leisure time.]

most in you, and I alway ready to do you service with God's grace, who have you, my right worshipful and my most best-beloved lord father, ever in his blessed keeping.

Written at Rotherfield Gray, the 24th day of July, &c.

Furthermore, my lord, and it like you, my lady my mother recommended her unto your

good lordship, in whom her most faith and trust is in, praying you ye will be good brother unto her, for she hath taken you for her chief counsel, &c.

JOHN LORD LOVELL.

Rotherfield Gray, in Oxfordshire,

24th of July, between 1455 and 1460.

34 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XCVIII.—(LXX. vol. iii. p. 283.)

To us who live in these days those lawless proceedings seem terrible, but in the tumultuous times here treated of such occurrences were too frequent; and the period here exhibited, distracted by civil dissensions, made them still more common. This letter must have been written between 1455, 33 H. VI. and 1460, 39 H. VI. [But this statement is only that of one party, who himself appears very willing to have recourse to the violence of which he complains. It is also clear by the man being sent to Lincoln Castle, and from the application for his being bailed out, that there was *some* legal form observed; the hanging also was to be effected only by "setting a sessions." In these times the active partisans had many opportunities, no doubt, of committing great oppression, but they do not appear to be customary or even numerous, as Sir John would make it appear, and usually by form of law at least, though sometimes no doubt the form was made the instrument of injustice.]

To my right honourable and right worshipful lord, my Lord Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT honourable and my right worshipful lord, I recommend me unto your good lordship with all my service, ever more desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, the which I pray God encrease and continue to his pleasure, and after your own heart's desire; thanking you of the good lordship that ye have showed me at all times, beseeching you alway of good continuance.

Please it your good lordship to be remembered how afore this time Hugh Wytham hath said he would be in rest and peace with me, and not to malign against me otherwise than law and right would; that notwithstanding, upon Monday last past, he and three men with him came into a servant's house of mine in Boston, called William Sheriff, and there, as he sat at his work, struck him upon the head and in the body with a dagger, and wounded him sore, and pulled him out of his house, and set him in prison without any cause reasonable, or without writ, or any other process showed unto him; and that me seems longs (*belongs*) not for him to do, but as he says he is indicted, and as your good lordship knows well, I and all my servants are in like wise, but an any man should have done it, it longs either to the sheriff or to your bailiff, as I conceive, and other cause he had none to him as far as I can know, but only for the maliciousness of that he hath unto me, nor I can think none other

but it is so. And now yesternight my Lord Welles came to Boston with four score horses, and in the morning following, took him out of prison, saying afore all people, "false thief thou shalt be hanged, and as many of thy master's men as may be gotten," as your servant John Abbott can report unto your good lordship, and hath taken him away with him to Tattershall, what to do with him I cannot say, but, as I suppose, to have him to Lincoln Castle; wherefore I beseech your good lordship in this matter to be my good lord, and that it please your good lordship to write a letter to the keeper of the castle of Lincoln, that it liked him to deliver him out of prison under a sufficient surety had for him, for and (*if*) they may keep him still by this mean they may take all the servants that I have, and so I may do again in like wise.

And also, as I am informed, without he be had out of prison in haste, it will be right grievous to him to heal of his hurt, he is so sore stricken; and if there be any service that your good lordship will command me to do in any country, please it you to send me word, and it shall be done to my power with the grace of God, which have you, my right honourable and worshipful lord, always in his blessed keeping. Written at Kyme, upon Wednesday next after our Lady's day, the Assumption, (15th August.)

Also, please it your good lordship to weet,

after this letter was made there came a man from Tattershall into my fenn, which ought me good will, and because he would not be holden suspect, he spoke with women which were milking kyne, and bade them go to a priest of mine to Dokdyke, and bid him fast go [and] give me warning, how that my Lord Willoughby,¹ my Lord Cromwell,² and my Lord Welles³ proposed then to set a sessions, and hang the said William Sheriff, an they might bring the intent about; and so, as I and your servant John Abbott stood together, the priest came and gave me warning hereof, which I trust for my worship your

good lordship would not should happen, for it were to me the greatest shame that might fall, but and [unless] it please your good lordship to write to all your servants in this country that they will be ready upon a day's warning to come when I send them word; I trust to God they shall not hang him against the law, but I, with help of your good lordship, shall be able to let [prevent] it.

By your servant,
WILLIAM TAILBOYS.⁴

Kyme, in Lincolnshire, Wednesday,
August, between 1455 and 1460.
33 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XCIX.—(LXXI. vol. iii. p. 289.)

This letter shows the terrible effects of civil commotions to individuals, who rise or fall as their party gains or loses any advantage. This Earl of Oxford and Sir Thomas Todenham were afterwards beheaded in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. [The "terrible effects" are certainly not shown in this letter. The Lancastrian party were probably in power when it was written, and idle rumours were raised of what they were likely to do; but nothing of all this took place. Sir Thomas Todenham appears throughout to have been an active Lancastrian, and was beheaded, after conviction, with Oxford and others for a treasonable intercourse with Queen Margaret. See Letter lxxvi.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that there is a great noise in this town, that my Lord of Oxford and Yelverton and ye be endited in Kent for maintaining of the oyer and determiner,⁵ and John Damme is indited there also of treason, because that he did Heydon inditen of treason for taking down of the quarter of the man; and the people that be against Sir Thomas Todenham, and Heydon be sore afraid because of this noise, and of other language that is had both in this town and in the country, that these said

Todenham and Heydon should be as well at ease, and have as great rule as ever they had.

James Gloys telleth me, that he hath sent you word of Heydon's horse (*q. whores?*) and of other things, more of which I was purposed to asent (*have sent*) you word of.

The holy Trinity have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next after Saint Mathias.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich,
Wednesday, February,
between 1455 and 1460. 34 and 39 H. VI.

¹ Richard Welles, a son of Lionel Lord Welles, married Joanna, daughter and heir to Robert Lord Willoughby, in whose right he was, in 1455, summoned to parliament as Lord Willoughby of Eresby.

² This, I think, must be Henry Lord Cromwell.

³ Lionel Lord Welles, fell in the battle of Towton, in 1461.

⁴ Who the writer William Tailboys was I have not been able to make out, but it is plain by his re-

questing the attendance of Lord Beaumont's servants, &c. that he meant to repel force by force, and to rescue his servant from a violent death, if he should be so fortunate as to overcome his adversaries.

⁵ A commission of oyer and terminer is the largest of the five commissions by which our judges of assize now sit in their several circuits. It was wont in former times to be only in use upon some sudden outrage or insurrection in any place.

LETTER C.—(LXXII. vol. iii. p. 291.)

It appears that Alice Ogard's cousin and counsel assisted her to good purpose, for on the 2nd of August, 1456, we find that Master Thomas Fairclowe, D.D. was presented by her to the church of Attleborough.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and entirely well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you heartily, letting you weet that there is a controversy moved betwixt my cousin John Radcliff,¹ of Attleborough and me for the advowson of the church of Attleborough, the which is new [*lately*] void, whereof the title is mine verily, as God knoweth, the which shall be opened unto you; and upon Thursday next, at Wymondham, there shall be taken an Enquiry de jure Patronatus, afore Master Robert Popy and Master Simon Thornham,² at which day I may nought be myself as God knoweth, and though I might it were not convenient (*q. becoming?*). And, therefore, right trusty cousin, considering that I am a widow impotent as of body, tenderly and heartily I pray you, if it like you to be there assisting my counsel in my right, as reason and law will,

upon Thursday next by eight of the clock, and Fincham,³ Spelman, and other of my counsel shall be then there waiting upon you; and, gentle cousin, have me excused though I write thus brielly and homely to you, for in truth I do it of a singular trust and affection the which I have in you, considering the good name and fame of truth, wisdom, and good conduct, the which I hear of you. And therefore and (*if*) ye may to your weal, I beseech you heartily to be there, and ye shall nought lose thereby, with the grace of Almighty Jesu, the which ever preserve and promote you, gentle cousin, in much worship to your heart's ease. At Bokenham Castle, on Tuesday in Pasche Week, in haste.

Dame ALICE OGARD.⁴

Bokenham, Easter Tuesday,
30 March, 1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CI.—(LXXIII. vol. iii. p. 295.)

The feoffment, which Botoner appears so anxious about, most probably concerned those lands which Sir John Fastolf intended to devote to charitable uses, as the founding of his college, &c. From the management of his accounts we see the manner in which the affairs of the great men of the time were conducted, and the method here proposed seems the best that could be contrived for bringing back his auditors to their accustomed exactness.

To my Master Paston.

PLEASE you to weet that, after due recommendation, it is so that my master sendeth me to London for the matter of Rochester as for divers of his own particular matters which concern not the law, &c. And I am like to tarry there till ye come, in case ye come within three weeks.

Sir, at reverence of God, sith (*since*) my master is fully in will to renew his feoffment, (*take care*) that it may be done by time by the surest ground that may be had, for, be it never so surely done, it shall be thought little

enough to keep his land out of trouble; and to spare for no counsel nor cost to make it sure, for a penny in season spent will save a pound.

I communed with my brother Spyrling, which sayeth he will do his attendance, and to keep it right close of the names,⁵ tarrying draweth peril.

And ye moved a good matter to the parson and to me at your last being at Caister, that my master should be learned (*informed*) what his household standeth upon yearly since he

¹ John Radcliff, Esq. married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Walter Lord Fitz Walter; he was in her right called Lord Fitz Walter, and was killed at Ferrybridge in 1460.

² These were civilians and officers belonging to the bishop's court.

³ Simeon Fincham, of Fincham, Esq., his son John married Agnes, daughter of John Spelman, of

Beckerton, Esq., I suppose the person here mentioned; he died in 1460, and Simeon in 1458.

⁴ Dame Alice Ogard was the widow of Sir Andrew Ogard, Knt., whose first wife was Margaret, the daughter of Sir John Clifton, Knt., of Bokenham Castle. He died in 1454, and Alice, his relict, in 1460.

⁵ Of the trustees named in the feoffment, I suppose

kept it wholly together at one place; and that done, then to see by the revenues of his yearly livelihood what may be laid and assigned out for that cause to maintain his said household, and over that, what may be assigned to bear out his pleas;¹ and also to pay for his foreign charges,² and deeds of alms to a convenient sum.

And since the greatest ordinary charge must be his household keeping, it were most expedient that ye would note well to remember specially my master to do (*cause*) his auditors cast up and make rolls of his accounts concerning the said household since he came into Norfolk these two years and half, which was never so long to do these forty winters, as ye know; and it is pity that his audit is none otherwise in that intended; ye must needs, if

ye will my master know how it stand with him yearly of his charges, that this be done first, as it was always accustomed; my master will accord it to be done, but it is forgotten through negligence of men given to sensuality, as Thomas Upton, me, and others;³ my master cannot know whether he go backward or forward till this be done.

I can not (*nought*) else, but ye will not forget this, that the auditors go verily about it to an end; and Heylesdon accounts be behind hand for two years too, great pity is; and it were (*I wish it were*) yours, or in any wise man's governance. At Norwich, hastily, the Wednesday in Easter week.

BOTOHRNER.

Norwich, Wednesday in Easter Week,
31 March, 1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CII.—(LXXIV. vol. iii. p. 299.)

We have in this letter a continuation of Botoner's advice concerning the management of Sir John Fastolf's affairs at Caister, &c., and proper methods proposed for remedying them. He seems to think that Sir John Fastolf was a considerable loser by concerning himself with ships, and in merchandise, &c., and hints that his corn and wool might be turned to better account than exchanged for wares at Yarmouth. The second part of this letter, which concerns political matters, seems to refer to the year 1456, when the king was again under the management of the queen and her party. The king and his friends were now at Hereford (Hereford I suppose it means), inquiring after and punishing those who had joined the Duke of York's army raised in Wales.

To the right worshipful Sir, John Paston, Esquire, being in Norwich, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, after due recommendation, please you to weet that I wrote a remembrance to you the day that I departed out of Norwich, by Richard, the parson's servant of Blofield, concerning certain matters to be remembered by your wisdom for my master's avail, which your great wisdom can well understand is right needful, as one thing in especial, that Shipdam and Spyrling ought to labour, first of anything that be-longeth, to audit the accounts of the receipts and dispenses (*disbursements*) of my master's household in Caister since he came last into Norfolk, which as well for the provisions that is had of his own growing as in money paid; for till the said accounts be made ordinately (*methodically*), which be of a great charge yearly, weet ye for certain my master shall

never know whether he goeth backward or forward; and many other accomptants, that maken livery (*make delivery*) of provisions of corns and cattle to the household by the receiver and by the bailiffs, cannot approve their liberates [*vouchers*] just, till the said household books be made up; and since it hath been kept ordinarily since my master began to keep house this fifty year almost, and when he hath been absent beyond sea, &c., it ought (*to*) be more readilier done and made up while he is present and well, the rather that his household meny [*retainers*] were not so whole together this forty year as be now at Caister. Also his minutres of accounts (*minutes or first draughts*) of his chief manor of Heylesdon for three years to make up and to examine; and I assure you full simply approved his woolls and hiss farm.

¹ His law business.

² Charges not connected with his household accounts.

³ [This is a most singular accusation for Botoner to lay against himself.]

And the third is, that, so would Jesu, my master's auditors would faithfully and plainly inform my master of the truth of the yearly great damage he beareth in disbursing his money about shipping and boats, keeping an house up at Yarmouth to his great harm, and receiveth but chaffer and ware for his corns and wools, &c. And then must abide a long day to make money; of such chaffer taking he shall never be monied, nor be answered clearly of his revenues yearly, but (*unless*) those things above said be amended betimes. In Lewis's days twelve years together my master was wont to lay up money yearly at London and Caister, and now the contrary, *de malo in pejus*.

I dare not be known of this bill, but ye may question and vele (*feel*) of the disposition of these matters of others, and then understand if I write justly or no; and ye, as of your motion, for my master's worship and profit, exhorting him, the steward, Shipdam, and Spyrling to take a labour and a pain that this be reformed.

I pray you and require you keep this matter to yourself. Your BOTONER.

As for novelties none cometh, but it is said the siege shall come to Calais; the Earl of Warwick¹ is yet at Canterbury with the

archbishop,² and the earl's younger brother³ is married to Sir Edmund Inglethorpe's daughter upon Saint Mark's day, the Earl of Worcester⁴ brought about the marriage; the queen and the king at Herford,⁵ the Lords Buckingham,⁶ Shrewsbury⁷ and others there; and now it is said Herbert⁸ shall come in, and appear at Leicester before the king and the lords, his life granted and goods, so he make amends to them he hath offended; many be indicted, some causelessly, which maketh Herbert's party stronger; and the burgesses and gentlemen about Herford will go with the king, wife and child, but (*unless*) a peace be made ere the king part thence; for else Herbert and his affinity will acquit them [*requite them*], as it is said.

The Earl of Warwick hath had the folks of Canterbury and Sandwich before him, and thanked them of their good hearts, and victualling of Calais, and prayeth them of continuance.

I send a bill of the names indicted, to my master and you, to see and laugh at their Welsh names descended of old pedigrees.⁹ Our Lord be with you; written hastily at London, the 1st day of May. BOTONER.

London, Saturday, 1st of May,
1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CIII.—(XXXI. vol. i. p. 131.)

This letter was written on Whitsun Eve, the 15th of May, in 1456, a short time after a tumult in London, between the inhabitants and some merchants of Lombardy. The court supposed the Duke of York's party to have encouraged it, and, by the report of Lord Beaumont being slain and the Earl of Warwick much hurt, (I suppose in this tumult,) it appears at least that the leaders of each party were drawn into it when it did happen, although no previous plan might be laid by either party for that purpose. But as the report was false of either of these noblemen being killed or wounded, so possibly neither might be present in the tumult.

To my Master Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir and my good master, I recommend me to you; this day I came home,

and as to our matters, I shall be with you on Monday and Tuesday next by my master's

¹ Richard Nevile Earl of Warwick.

² Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Chancellor.

³ John Nevile, afterwards Marquis Montague, married Isabel, daughter and heir of Sir Edmund Ingoldesthorpe, of Burgh Green in Cambridgeshire, by his wife Jane, sister, and at length co-heir of John Lord Tiptoft, first Earl of Worcester. He was slain in the battle of Barnet in 1471.

⁴ John Tiptoft was created Earl of Worcester in 1449, and in Edward IVth's reign elected a Knight of the Garter. During that king's deposition in 1470, the Earl of Warwick obtained in parliament that Worcester should be beheaded.

⁵ This must mean Hereford.

⁶ Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, killed at the battle of Northampton in 1460.

⁷ John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, he was Lord Treasurer, and fell at the battle of Northampton, *set. 49*.

⁸ Sir William Herbert, knight, had greatly assisted the Duke of York in raising forces, and ever continuing a steady Yorkist, often contended against the Lancastrians. He was afterwards deservedly in favour with Edward IV., and by him was created Earl of Pembroke; he was taken prisoner at the battle of Banbury in 1469, and beheaded by the rebels.

⁹ [This list does not appear.]

advice, and inform you of all, and of such as I will not write. Your coffer is at the Prince's inn; send for it when ye like, by the token¹ I had of Margaret Goche, a book of law that Wigge brought me.

As for tidings, my masters your brethren fare well, and recommend them to my mistress their mother, to you and to all, &c. As for tidings else, the king is at Shene, the queen and prince at Tutbury,² but, if it be, the latter removing. Tidings were that the Lord Beaumont was slain, and my Lord Warwick sore hurt, 1000 men slain and six score knights and 'squires hurt, and nothing true, blessed be God. As for the Lombards,

two of the trespassers were hanged on Monday, and there are by this time proclamations made, or shall be, through London, the peace to be kept upon great pains; and the Lombards to occupy their merchandizes³ as they did, till the council and parliament have otherwise determined, and no more as yet.

The attaint abideth unrul'd till the next term, as I shall tell you, and it shall do well with God's grace, who have you in keeping and all yours. Written at Caister vigilia Pentecosten.

YOUR OWN JOHN BOCKING.⁴

Whitsun Even, 15th of May, 1456.
34 H. VI.

LETTER CIV.—(XXXII. vol. i. p. 135.)

[THIS letter is also from Bocking to J. Paston, dated from Horsleydown, June 7, 1456, and contains a number of bits of in-

telligence, public and private, but of no general interest.]

LETTER CV.—(XXXIII. vol. i. p. 139.)

[THIS is a short letter from Lord Scales to J. Paston, urging him to keep an appointment for "Thursday seven days next coming; which shall be for the best as I trust,

notwithstanding I suppose learned men will not be easy for to get, because of this busy time of harvest." It is dated from Middleton, Norfolk, the 10th of August, 1456.]

LETTER CVI.—(XXXIV. vol. i. p. 141.)

[FROM William Botoner to J. Paston, from London, in July, 1457, as is guessed, for the year is not given. It is another letter of scraps of news of law proceedings, and other matters of no general interest. Among other things

it tells us:—"Justice is done daily upon thieves and malefactors, and people be glad that justice may proceed," and that "the soldiers be more temperate than they were."]

LETTER CVII.—(XXXV. i. p. 143.)

From these memoranda we may collect that her son, Clement Paston, who was born in 1442, had already been at Cambridge, where he had been negligent of his learning, and where he had been properly corrected. He was now under the tuition of a Mr. Greenfield, in London, to whom his mother herein delegates proper authority to correct him, with a reward in hand and the promise of a greater if he shall be successful. Clement's wardrobe seems well furnished with gowns. Elizabeth Paston, her daughter, was at this time between twenty and thirty years old, and seems to be brought up in the family of Lady Pole, where, though she

¹ This shows the caution used at this time, for preventing impositions on the delivery of goods at inns, &c.

² In Staffordshire, our historians say at Coventry.

³ This seems to point out to us that this riot was occasioned by some matters relative to trade, and not,

as some of our historians relate, "to a foreigner's wearing a dagger."

⁴ John Bocking was one of the household of Sir John Fastolf, probably he was his counsellor, for men of rank and fortune in those days constantly retained one or more in their service.

paid for her board, she was employed in needle-works of various kinds. This Lady Pole was most probably the daughter, or wife of a son, of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, the father of William Duke of Suffolk.

Errands to London of Agnes Paston, the 28th day of January, 1457, the year of King Henry VI. the 36th.

To pray Greenfield to send me faithfully word by writing how Clement Paston hath done his endeavour in learning.

And if he hath not done well, nor will not amend, pray him that he will truly belash (*whip*) him till he will amend; and so did the last master, and the best that ever he had at Cambridge.

And say (*tell*) Greenfield, that if he will take upon him to bring him into good rule and learning, that I may verily know he doth his endeavour, I will give him 10 marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for his labour, for I had lever (*rather*) he were fairly buried than lost for default.

Item, to see how many gowns Clement hath, and they that be bare, let them be raised, (*let them have a new nap¹ set upon them.*)

He hath a short green gown. And a short musterdevelers² gown, (*which*) were never raised.

And a short blue gown, that was raised, and made of a side gown when I was last at London.

And a side³ russet gown furred with beaver was made this time two years.

And a side murray gown was made this time twelvemonth.

Item, to do make me (*get made for me*) six spoons of eight ounces of troy weight, well fashioned and double gilt.

And say (*tell*) Elizabeth Paston that she must use herself to work readily, as other gentlewomen do, and somewhat to help herself therewith.

Item, to pay the Lady Pole 26*s.* and 8*d.* for her board.

And if Greenfield have done well his devoir to Clement, or will do his devoir, give him the noble, (6*s.* 8*d.*)

AGNES PASTON.

LETTER CVIII.—(XXXVI. vol. i. p. 147.)

This letter requires some previous explanation from our English history, before it can be properly understood. The Duke of York, in 1456, having not yet openly asserted his right to the crown, the queen's party, though informed of his intentions on that head, could not take such steps as if his designs had been more apparently avowed. The king, however, in the summer of this year sent letters to the duke, and to the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, requiring them to meet him at Coventry on matters of state. They were suspicious of the queen; however they set forwards, but either on the road or at their arrival their emissaries informed them that they were in danger, whereupon they immediately separated and departed. Foreign affairs, during the greatest part of the year 1457, kept both parties rather quiet, but in January, when domestic disputes were again ready to break out, endeavours were used for a reconciliation, and the king wrote with his own hand letters to the Duke of York and his friends, requesting them to repair to London, in order to have all matters amicably and sincerely adjusted. This letter, from the Earl of Salisbury to Viscount Beaumont, seems to have been written in answer to that received by him from the king, and sent to the Earl by one of his highness's grooms of his chamber. It appears by this answer that the Earl was fearful of putting himself (at least till he had consulted his friends) into the king's and queen's power, and therefore feigns himself very sick; but at the same time he seems conscious that his sickness will not be believed to be so bad as he had represented it, by the particular care he takes to express himself concerning it. Not content with this representation, he likewise refers his lordship to another person to vouch the truth of it, not indeed to Hagerston, the king's messenger, who brought him the letter, but to one Robert Danby: and I think it may be concluded, that had his illness been real, he would have thought that his word and honour as a nobleman would have been a sufficient confirmation of the truth of his assertion. His fears, however, were certainly well grounded, considering the snare he had

¹ "I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress the commonwealth, and turn it, and set a new nap upon it."—Henry VI. Part ii. Act iv.

² Probably *Mestier de Velours*, French, a half velvet.

³ A side gown may mean a long one; for in Laucham's account of Queen Elizabeth's entertain-

ment at Kenilworth Castle, 1575, the minstrel's "gown had side (i. e. long) sleeves down to the mid-leg." The gown however described by Mrs. Paston, appears rather to have been the *Sib-peap*. *Lateralis vestis*, sc. ad latera tegenda. *Lumbaris toga*. See Reubenij Glossarium, 65. Ælfr. Gloss. p. 68 and 69. A gown to cover the sides or loins.

escaped when last summoned; but it may be supposed, that, on a meeting or consultation between him and the Duke of York, it was determined that they would both attend. All our historians agree that they came, though accompanied with armed followers; and the next letter written by William of Worcester, and dated 1st of February, mentions these noblemen as then arrived; so that very soon after sending away this letter the Earl must have altered his plan. In consequence of this attendance a public and specious reconciliation took place, about the latter end of March or the beginning of April; and in a procession to St. Paul's Church, the Earl of Salisbury went hand in hand with the Duke of Somerset, immediately before the king.

The direction of this letter from an avowed Yorkist is very particular, and being written to a nobleman in office about the king's person, and a strict adherent to the House of Lancaster, the friendly address may justly be suspected of wanting sincerity; but both these noblemen being Knights Companions of the most noble Order of the Garter, this brotherly mode of address was usual.

*To the right worshipful, and, with all mine heart, right entirely well-beloved brother, the
Viscount Beaumont.*

RIGHT worshipful, and, with all mine heart, right entirely well-beloved brother, I recommend me unto you; and for so much as, by the king's most noblest letters, brought me late by Hagerston, one of the grooms of his chamber, I am desired to come unto his highness to London.

Whereunto for such grievous disease and infirmities as it hath liked our lord to visit me with, whereof Robert Danby can at large declare unto you, I can ne mowe (*nor may*) dispose me; without feynyng (*feigning*), by the truth I owe unto the king, but that thereby I doubt not I should not recover [*all the*] days of my life such hurt as, by the reason of the said disease, would grow unto me; the which hath right fervently and sore holden me in many diverse behalves, so that sith (*since*) my last coming from London, I had not by the space of six days together my health.

Wherefore, brother, I pray you with all

mine whole heart, that it like you to call tofore you the said Robert Danby, and to take of him the very truth in the premises; and thereupon to be my good and tender moyen (*mean*), as by your wisdom can best be thought convenable unto the king's good grace, for the excuse of my none coming; praying you heartily to certify me by comers between, such tidings as ye shall have in those parts, with other your good pleasure to be performed at my power, as knoweth our Lord, to whom I beseech to ever have you in his blessed protection and keeping.

Written at Sheriff Hutton, the 24th day of January.

Your true brother, which prayeth you heartily to excuse me to the king's highness,

R. SALISBURY.¹

Sheriff Hutton, Tuesday 24th of January,
1457-8. 36 H. VI.

¹ Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, father of the Earl of Warwick, was a principal promoter of the Duke of York's pretensions; he was a nobleman of great character, and of consummate prudence and abilities; but being taken prisoner at the battle of Wakefield, in December, 1460, he was beheaded.

The conclusion (from the words "Yortrew," &c.) and signature of this letter are written by the Earl himself, the other parts of it by his secretary. We have given above a fac-simile of the concluding part of this letter in the hand-writing of the Earl.

LETTER CIX.—(XXXVII. vol. i. p. 151.)

[THIS letter is from Botoner (Worcester) to Sir John Fastolf, and narrates some law proceedings of no consequence, and a few

political matters, either well known, or of no interest.]

LETTER CX.—(LXXV. vol. iii. p. 305.)

At a time when the kingdom was in a state of constant alarm from the civil contentions between the White and Red Roses, it is not to be wondered at that the coasts were neglected, and that the enemies of England took advantage of this neglect by pillaging the inhabitants near the shores. These coasts were likewise exposed to the enemy in 1449, see Letter xxiii. p. 16.

To John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple, at London, be this letter delivered in haste.

SON, I greet you, and send you God's blessing and mine; as for my daughter your wife, she fareth well, blessed be God! as a woman in her plight may do, and all your sons and daughters.

And forasmuch as ye will send me no tidings, I send you such as be in this country; Richard Lynsted came this day from Paston¹ and let me weet, that on Saturday last past, Dravell, half-brother to Warren Harman, was taken with enemies, walking by the seaside, and (*they*) have him forth with them; and they took two pilgrims,² a man and a woman, and they robbed the woman and let her go, and led the man to the sea; and when they knew he was a pilgrim, they gave him money, and set him again on the land; and they have this week taken four vessels off Winterton, and Happesburgh and Eccles.

Men be sore afraid for taking of me, for

there be ten great vessels of the enemy's; God give grace that the sea may be better kept than it is now, or else it shall be a perilous dwelling by the sea-coast.

I pray you greet well your brethren, and say (*tell*) them that I send them God's blessing and mine, and say William that if Janet Lauton be not paid for the crimson coat which Alson [*Alison or Alice*] Crane³ wrote to her for in her own name, that then he pay her, and see Alson Crane's name stricken out of her book, for she saith she will ask no man the money but Alson Crane. And I pray you that ye will remember the letter that I sent you last, and God be with you.

Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next before St. Gregory (12th March).

By your mother, AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, Wednesday, 8th March,
1457-8. 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXI.—(XXXVIII. vol. i. p. 155.)

This letter gives us an account of those noblemen who came to London in consequence of the king's letters, requesting their attendance, in order to establish a reconciliation between both parties. It appears that each party had a separate council, the lords who were friends to the king, being lodged without the city, meeting at the White Friars; and those in the Duke of York's interest, being lodged within the city, at the Black Friars. The reason given is—their mutual convenience; the real one, perhaps—political; though as the meetings were held at different times of the day, the lords of each party might be present. Holinshed says, that the king's friends met in the Chapter House in Westminster.

To my Master Fastolf, at Caister, in haste.

LIKE it your mastership to weet, that as for tidings, the council is, the forenoon, at the

Black Friars, for the ease of resorting of the lords that are within the town; and, at after-

¹ Paston is situated exactly on the north-east point of the Norfolk coast.

² We have here an instance of the respect paid to pilgrims; for we find as soon as the man carried aboard the ships was known by the commander to be on pilgrimage, he was dismissed, and set on shore with

money in his pocket, which probably might be given to him as a recompense for what the sailors had taken from the woman on shore, or to defray the expenses of his pilgrimage.

³ This was probably a daughter of Robert Crane, of Stonham, in Suffolk.

noon, at the White Friars in Fleet-street, for the lords without the town; and all things shall come to a good conclusion with God's grace; for the king shall come hither this week, and the queen also, as some men say, and my Lords Buckingham,¹ and Stafford² with her, and much people.

My Lord of Canterbury³ taketh great pain upon him daily, and will write unto you the certainty of such tidings as fall; and should have done ere this time, save for that he would know an end of the matter.

Other tidings here are none, save my Lord of Exeter is displeased that the Earl of Warwick shall keep the sea, and hath therefore received this week 1000*l.* of the Hanaper.⁴

The messenger was on horseback when I wrote you this bill, and therefore it was done in haste, and our Lord Jesu keep you. Written at London the Wednesday after Midlent.⁵

And my Lord of Canterbury told me that the Frenchmen⁶ have been before you, and that ye shot many guns, and so he told all the lords. I have desired him to move the council for refreshing of the town of Yarmouth with stuff of ordnance, and guns and gunpowder, and he said he would.

Your humble servant,

JOHN BOCKING.

London, Wednesday, 15th of March,
1457-8. 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXII.—(LXXVI. vol. iii. p. 309.)

I have given this long letter to show the means used to tamper with sheriffs and under-sheriffs, that juries might be returned favourable to the cause of those who had influenced the returning officer; this conversation is a very curious one, and exhibits care, caution, and finesse on both sides. We are happy in living in times when neither the crown improperly interferes in matters of trial by jury, nor are any of our sheriffs in this age ever accused of packing a jury to oblige particular parties. The stream of justice runs pure and clear—may it ever continue so! This letter was most probably written between the years 1457 and 1460 (see Letters xciv. and xcvi.), as Lord Molyns was a Lancastrian, and beheaded early in the reign of Edward IV., when, from the letters here referred to, it appears there were matters of property in dispute between this nobleman and J. Paston. The sheriffs for the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk for the following years were, for 1457 Richard Bothe, for 1458 Giles de Saintloe, 1459 William de Calthorpe, and 1460 Philip Wentworth; it was with one of these, therefore, that this conversation passed. The manner in which our nobles travelled in this age is here pointed out. [Sir John Fenn, we think, is too apt to confound attempts with deeds in order to depreciate our ancestors unduly. In this case we have an agent of Paston's writing an account to his employer of his interview with the sheriff, apparently an intimate friend of Paston's. The agent's guesses are worth nothing; and what are the facts? The sheriff refuses a present for something he had done, and only consents at last that it shall be left till he and Paston meet; he declares "he took never no money of none of them all;" and "he trustyth to Godde to inpanell seche men as shuln to hise knowleche be indeferent, and non eomon juro's." And what does the tampering appear to amount to? The want of the date of the year to so many of the letters makes it difficult to be precise in the chronological arrangement, but there is no reason to doubt that this and the following letter, and those alluded to of Lord Molyns, all refer to the same matter—namely, a case of disputed right of possession, in which even at the present day it is not uncouth to have resort to force, though not quite of so rough a character as was in use in an age when men were compelled by law and necessity to be exercised in arms. We have therefore in this instance brought the letters together which Fenn had separated. The favour asked appears to refer to proceedings against Lord Molyns' party for a riot, to which the sheriff replies, it is the king's matter, and not Paston's, but he shall have a fair jury; the bribe seems to have been a bond of indemnity (a custom yet in disputed cases), which he declines, as it cannot be made large enough to make him entirely safe. There is thus very slight evidence of an attempt to bribe, and we think strong proof of its rejection if offered, and a determination to let the law take its fair course between

¹ Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, was slain in the battle of Northampton in 1460.

² Henry Stafford, Earl of Stafford, grandson to the Duke of Buckingham, succeeded him in 1460; and was the principal instrument in raising Richard III. to the throne; but afterwards plotting against him, he was obliged to retire from court, and conceal himself; when being treacherously betrayed, he was taken and beheaded without any form of trial in 1483.

³ [Thomas Bourchier. See Letter xciv.]

⁴ The Hanaper was the office where the king's treasures were kept, and was at this time, I believe, another name for the Exchequer.

⁵ The first Sunday in Lent happened in the year 1457-8 on the 19th of February, and Midlent Sunday on the 12th of March.

⁶ During the year 1457, the French made several attempts upon our coast, but without much effect.

both. The custom of parties addressing the acting officer or the judges was bad, no doubt, but it does not of itself make out corruption. We consider this period much more free from such a reproach than the later one, extending from the time of James I. till some years after the accession of the House of Hanover.]

To my right reverend and worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your mastership to weet, that I have spoken with the sheriff at his place, moving to him, as for that that was left with his under-sheriff, it is your will he should send a man of his for it; for though it were more, ye would gladly he should take it; he thanked you, and said his under-sheriff was at London, and himself had none deserved, and if he had he would have taken it. And when I departed from him I desired him again to send therefore, and then he said it should abide till ye came home, whereby I conceive he would have it, and be glad to take it. Moreover I remembered him of his promises made before to you at London, when he took his oath and charge, and that ye were with him when he took his oath, and other divers times; and for the promises made by him to you at that time, and other times at the oyer determiner at Lynn, ye proposed you by the trust that ye have in him for to attempt and rear actions that should be to the avail of him and of his office;¹ he would have known what the actions should be; I said I could not tell him, and then he said he would do for you that he may, except for the acquittal of the Lord Molyns' men, insomuch as the king hath written to him for to show favour to the Lord Molyns and his men, and as he saith the indictment longeth (*belongeth*) to the king and not to you, and the Lord Molyns (*is*) a great lord.² Also, as he saith, now late the Lord Molyns hath sent him a letter, and my Lord of Norfolk another, for to show favour in these indictments, he dare not abide the jeopardy of that that he should offend the king's commandment, he know not how the king may be informed of him, and what shall be said to him.

And then I said, as for any jeopardy that he should abide in anything that he doth for you, or by your desire, ye have offered him, and will perform it, sufficient surety for to save him harmless, and therefore I supposed there would none reasonable man think but that he might do for you without any jeopardy;³ and then he said he might none surety take that passed an hundred pounds; and the Lord Molyns is a great lord, he might soon cause him to lose that and much more; then I said, by that mean in default of a sheriff every man may be put from his livelihood; and then he said, if it were for the livelihood men would take them the nearer for to abide a jeopardy, but by his faith, as he swore, if the king wrote again to him he will no longer abide the jeopardy of the king's writing, but he trusteth to God to impanel such men as should to his knowledge be indifferent, and none common jurors.

As me seemeth it would do good and ye would get a commandment of the king to the sheriff for to show you favour, and to impanel gentlemen, and not for to favour none such riots, &c.; for he said that he sent you the letter that the king sent him, and ye said a man should get such (*an*) one for a noble (6s. 8d.).⁴

Item, I remembered him of the promises that he made to Tymperley, and that if he would make you very true promise ye would reward him as much as he would desire, or any other reasonable man for him, and as much or more than any adversary ye have would give him; then he said he took never no money of none of them all; there was proffered him at Walsingham for the Lord Molyns twenty nobles (6l. 13s. 4d.), he had not a penny; moreover I proffered

¹ [These were actions proposed to be raised by the sheriff against Lord Molyns' men, as common rioters.]

² [This does not imply improper interference, but that Lord Molyns had told his story, which was of course favourable to himself, and such as to cause the king to write to the sheriff not to allow of indictments in what was properly a civil suit.]

³ [This shows that the jeopardy of offending the king's commandment was merely legal and pecuniary.]

⁴ [Another proof of the little importance of the king's interference, and of the one-sidedness of Paston's wishes, "non seche riots" were to be favoured in Lord Molyns; though the following letter from Agnes Paston evinces no disinclination to resort to the same means.]

him, if he would make you promise that ye might verily trust upon him, ye would give him in hand as he would desire, or to leave a sum if he would have named it in a mean (*middle*) man's hand, and such as he hath trust to; and then he said, if he might do for you, or if he do anything for you, then he will take your money with a good will; and other promise I could not have of him, but that he would do for you all that he may, except for the indictments; I conceive verily he hath made promise to do his part that they shall be acquitted, but I suppose he hath made none other promise against you for the livelihood, but he looketh after a great bribe, but it is not for to trust him verily without that he may not choose [*that he cannot help.*]¹

I suppose he had no writing from my Lord of Norfolk as he said.

I was at Framlingham for to have spoken with Tymperley, Debenham, or Berry, and they were all out; my lord as he came from London he was at Ipswich on Monday, and when he (*came*) without the town towards Framlingham, he had all his men ride forth afore a great pace, for he would follow softly, and when his men were out of sight, he rode with five men to an esquire's place of his thereby, and on Tuesday rode my lady to him, and so I did nought at Framlingham. No more at this time, but Almighty Jesu speed you, and have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the Thursday next after Saint Austin, &c. (28th August.)

By your servant,
JOHN OSBERN.

Norwich, August, between 1457 and 1460.
35 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXIII.—(LXXVII. vol. iii. p. 315.)

The direction of this curious letter is obliterated, but it is plainly from Margaret Paston to her husband; and the paper is likewise so completely filled with writing that she has not even either subscribed or dated it; but by the mentioning of Sir John Fastolf, it must have been written before 1459. We have here a particular account of the offensive weapons used in the castles, and even in the common houses of the inferior people, who seemed to have lived in a continued state of warfare with their neighbours, and to be prepared to oppose force by force. We can from this account likewise form a judgment for what purposes the embrasures now remaining in ancient buildings were intended; and from their heights and dimensions determine whether they were to be shot through with arrows, or to fire through with guns.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, and pray you to get some cross-bows and wyndacs,² (*windlasses*) to bind them with and quarrels,³ for your houses here be so low that there may none man shoot out with no long bow, though we had never so much need.

I suppose ye should have such things of Sir John Fastolf if ye would send to him; and also I would ye should get two or three short pole-axes to keep with [*in*] doors, and as many jackets and (*if*) ye may.

Partrich and his fellowship are sore afraid that ye would enter again upon them, and they have made great ordinance within the house, and it is told me they have made bars to bar the doors crosswise, and they have

made wickets on every quarter of the house to shoot out at, both with bows and with hand-guns: and the holes that be made from hand-guns they be scarce knee high from the plancher (*floor*), and of such holes be made five, there can none man shoot out at them with no hand-bows.

Purry fell in fellowship with William Hasard at Quarles's, and told him that he would come and drink with Partrich and with him, and he said he should be welcome, and after noon he went thither for to espy what they dedyn (*had done*), and what fellowship they had with them; and when he came thither the doors were fast sperred [*bolted*]⁴ and there were none folks with them but Maryoth, and Capron and his wife, and Quarles's wife, and another man in a black⁵

¹ [This is merely an opinion, and proves nothing.]

² Windacs are what we now call grappling-irons, with which the bow-string is drawn home.

³ An arrow with a square head.

⁴ [Orig. "sperid." Feen translates "spearred," and explains "shut."]

⁵ [A black—mourning. Black is used by Massinger and other dramatic poets in this sense frequently.]

yed (*went*) somewhat halting, I suppose by his words that it was Norfolk of Gimmingham; and the said Purry espied all these foresaid things.

And Maryoth and his fellowship had much great language that shall be told you when ye come home.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to do buy for me one lb. of almonds and one lb. of sugar, and that ye will do buy some frieze to make of your children's gowns, ye shall have best cheap and best choice of Hays's wife

as it is told me. And that ye will buy a yard of broad cloth of black for one hood for me of 4*d.* or four shillings a-yard, for there is neither good cloth nor good frieze in this town.' As for the children's gowns and (*if*) I have them, I will do them maken (*have them made.*)

The Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

MARGARET PASTON.

No date, but before
1459. 37 H. VI.

LETTER CXIV.—(XLIX. vol. i. p. 193.)

To my trusty and well beloved, the vicary and tenants of my Lordship of Gresham.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friends, I greet you well, and put you all out of doubt for all that ye have done for me; and the money that ye pay to my well-beloved servant John Partrich I will be your warrantas for your discharge, and save you harmless against all those that would grieve you to my power.

And as heartily as I can, I thank you of the good will ye have had and have towards me; and as to the title of right that I have to the lordship of Gresham (*it*) shall within

short time be known, and by the law so determined that ye shall all be glad that hath ought me your good will therein.

And Almighty God keep you, and by his grace I shall be with you soon after the parliament is ended.

Written at London, on Our Lady's even last past.

ROBERT HUNGERFORD, LORD MOLYNS.

21st of March,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXV.—(XLVIII. vol. i. p. 191.)

Robert Hungerford, Lord Molyms, attached himself to the House of Lancaster, and was beheaded in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., and though this letter has no date, I should suppose it might be written between 1457 and 1460, when the Bishop of Winchester was Lord Chancellor, especially as Lord Molyms pays so much attention to the bishop's recommendation. [This and the preceding letter have been transposed from the order in which they are placed by Fenn, in order, as they have no certain dates, but treat of the same affair as the foregoing letters, to bring the whole together. They also confirm what we have already stated as to the course of justice, as we see in the present letter that Paston applies to the Bishop of Winchester, then Lord Chancellor, for a private settlement of grievances betwixt himself and Lord Molyms, to which the latter consents.]

To the worshipful Father in God, and my right good Lord, the Bishop of Winchester.¹

WORSHIPFUL father in God, and my right good lord, as heartily as I can I recommend me to your good lordship, to the which please it to weet that I have received your letter; by the which I understand the daily suit to your lordship as of Paston, as for the matter betwixt him and me, wherein also I feel that he is willed that communication and treaty

should be had betwixt his counsel and mine now at Midsummer; to the which, my lord, I am at the reverence of your lordship well agreed, and have sent to my counsel at London, after the seeing of this your last letter, as for the treaty betwixt him and me, and that they should give full attendance to the end of the matter between the said Paston and me as though I were present with them.

And, my lord, it were too great a thing, and it lay in my power, but I would do at the reverence of your lordship, unless that it

¹ William de Waynfleet or Patten, Provost of Eton, was appointed Bishop of Winchester in 1447, and continued bishop of that see till 1486, having just lived to see the line of Lancaster reascend the throne, to which he had always been a faithful subject.

should hurt me too greatly; which I wote (*know*) well your lordship would never desire.

And God for his mercy have you, right worshipful father in God, and my right good lord, in his blessed keeping.

Written with mine own chancery hand in haste, the 13th day of June, at Telfont.

Very heartily, your MOLYNS.

Telfont, in Wiltshire, 13th of June,
between 1457 and 1460.
35 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXVI.—(XXXIX. vol. i. p. 157.)

The beginning of this letter, after the usual commendations, refers to a marriage that seemed in agitation for the writer; the other part gives a most particular and curious account of a sea-engagement, in which the writer was present and bore a part, between the Earl of Warwick and the Spaniards; about which our historians are much divided, as to what nation the ships taken belonged, &c. From this authentic narrative it appears that the Earl took six of the trading ships of Spain, and then was obliged to retreat, and secure them and himself in Calais; the immediate exchange of prisoners is a curious piece of intelligence. This battle was fought on Monday the 29th of May, 1458, 36 H. VI. Holinshed says this sea-engagement was fought about Midsummer 1459, &c. A Commission of Inquiry concerning this engagement was granted in July, 1458.

*Unto my right worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, this letter be delivered in haste. **

RIGHT worshipful, and my most best-beloved mistress and cousin, I recommend me unto you as lowly as I may, evermore desiring to hear of your good welfare; the which I beseech Almighty Jesu to preserve you, and keep you to his pleasure, and to your gracious heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I was in good hele (*health*) at the making of this letter, blessed be God; praying you, that it please you for to send me word, if my father were at Norwich with you at this Trinity mass or no, and how the matter doth between my mistress Blanch Witchingham and me; and if ye suppose that it shall be brought about or no, and how ye feel my father, if he be well willing thereto or no; praying you lowly that I may be recommended lowly unto my mistress, Arblaster's wife, and unto my mistress Blanch her daughter specially.

Right worshipful cousin, if it please you for to hear of such tidings as we have here, the basset (*embassy*) of Burgundy shall come to Calais the Saturday after Corpus Christi day, as men say five hundred horse of them.

Moreover, on Trinity Sunday in the morning, came tidings unto my Lord of Warwick, that there were 28 sail of Spaniards¹ on the sea, and whereof there was sixteen great ships of forecastle; and then my lord went, and

manned five ships of forecastle² and three carvells³ and four spynnes;⁴ and on the Monday, in the morning after Trinity Sunday, we met together afore Calais at four at the clock in the morning, and fought together till ten at the clock; and there we took six of their ships, and they slew of our men about fourscore, and hurt a 200 of us right sore; and there were slain on their part about 120, and hurt a 500 of them.

And happed me, at the first aboarding of us, we took a ship of 300 ton, and I was left therein, and twenty-three men with me; and they fought so sore that our men were fain to leave them, *and go the⁵* and then come they and aboarded the ship that I was in, and there I was taken, and was prisoner with them six hours, and was delivered again for their men that were taken before; and, as men say, there was not so great a battle upon the sea this forty winters: and forsooth we were well and truly beat, and my lord hath sent for more ships, and like to fight together again in haste.

No more I write unto you at this time, but

² Ships of forecastle were ships with forestages, and carried about one hundred and fifty men each; they were the largest ships then in use. A barge carried about eighty men, and a balynger about forty.

³ Carvells were ships of a middle size.

⁴ Spynnes, or pinnaces, carried about twenty-five men each.

⁵ These words are struck across in the original letter.

¹ [Fenn in mistake has here printed ships.]

that it please you for to recommend me unto my right reverend and worshipful cousin your husband, and mine uncle Gournay, and to mine aunt his wife, and to all good masters and friends where it shall please you; and after the writing I have from you I shall be at you in all haste.

Written on Corpus Christi day¹ in great haste.

By your own humble servant and cousin,

JOHN JERNYNGAN.²

Calais, Corpus Christi day,
Thursday, 1st June,
1458, 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXVII.—(XL. vol. i. p. 163.)

I have given this letter as containing several promotions to offices in the state, but I cannot ascertain the date. It must have been, I think, in the latter part of the reign of Henry VI. Sir Thomas Stanley died in 1458 or 1459. He was succeeded by his son Sir Thomas, who, in 1461, was created Lord Stanley.

To my Master Paston.

I RECOMMEND me unto your good mastership, and as for tidings, Arblaster came home to my lord on Monday at supper time; and my master Daniel is steward of the Duchy of Lancaster beyond Trent, and Arblaster saith, he hath made me his under-steward.

And as for the chamberlainship of England, the Lord Beaumont hath it, and the Lord Rivers (*is*) constable of England.

As for the Duchy on this side Trent, Sir Thomas Todenham had a joint patent with the Duke of Suffolk, which, if it be resumed, Sir Thomas Stanley hath a bill ready endorsed thereof.

My lord will not to Leicester. My master Daniel desireth you thither. I shall ride thitherward on Friday by times.

Written in haste at Winch, the 13th day of May.

I pray you to think upon my matter to my mistress your wife for my mistress Anne, for in good faith I have fully conquered my lady since ye went, so that I have her promise to be my good lady; and that she shall help me by the faith of her body.

Your servant, DENYES.

Winch, 13th of May,
1453—, H. VI.

LETTER CXVIII.—(LXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 319.)

This letter appears to be written between jest and earnest, he laments the smallness of his standing wages, and seems to hint that his master, Sir John Fastolf, would be willing to provide for him if he could do it at the expense of another. The date is uncertain and immaterial, though it must be before 1459. 38 H. VI.

To my Master Paston, H. R.

AFTER due recommendation with my simple service preceding, please your mastership to weet, that as to such remembrance that ye desire me to continue forth, to the uttermost I shall, with good will, so as my master will license me, as oft as I can, the officer to have leisure to be with me, for ye know well I cannot do it alone, &c.

And whereas ye of your pleasure write me or call me Master Worcester, I pray and require you forget that name of mastership, for I am not amended by my master of a farthing in certainty, but of wages of household in common *entant* comme nous plaira;³ by Worcester or Botoner I have five shillings yearly, all costs borne, to help to pay for

¹ Is always on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday which fell this year on the 28th of May.

² The family of Jernegan, or Jerningham, has been a family of distinction, in Norfolk and Suffolk, ever since the Conquest, and at present flourishes at Cossey in Norfolk. [Now Lords Stafford, 1840.] John Jernegan appears to have had a command in this engagement: he was the son of John Jernegan, who died 1474.

³ [The original is "but of wags of housold in comune (entant come nous plaira);" we should prefer, instead of Fenn's reading, "but of wages of household in common as much (*autant*) as we please;" that is, he had little or no salary, but plenty to eat and drink; was treated like a menial, and not as a gentleman and scholar as he was.]

bonnets that I lose; I told so my master this week, and he said [*told*] me yesterday, he wished me to have been a priest so I had been disposed, to have given me a living by reason (*means*) of a benefice, that another man must give it, as the bishop, but (*if*) he would; and so I indure inter egenos ut servus ad aratrum.

Forgive me, I write to make you laugh;

and our Lord bring my master into a better mood for others as (*well as*) for me. At Caister, the 2nd day of September.

I pray you displeasure not your servant be so long, for my master letted him.

Your

W. WORCESTER.

Caister, 2d of September,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXIX.—(LXXIX. lv. iii. p. 302l.)

We see that in the age here mentioned, venison was a present worthy acceptance from a nobleman to a great commoner, and a Knight of the Garter. It might have been supposed, from the large possessions of Sir John Fastolf in Norfolk and Suffolk, that a park had been a part of them, but from the circumstance here mentioned it certainly was not. [This deduction does not appear quite certain, though it may have been so.] John de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, from whom this present of venison came, married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, Knight, of Wiggenhall St. German's, in Norfolk: by her he became possessed of a considerable property in that county. "Master" appears from this letter to be a title of distinction which William Worcester wishes to dispense with, as it does not contribute to affording him larger wages from his master, Sir J. Fastolf.—That seems to be the meaning of what occurs in this letter [and in the preceding].

To my master, John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and my master heartily thanketh you for the venison that ye sent him from my Lord of Oxford, and prayeth you that he may be recommended to his noble lordship. And God thank you for your special remembrance of my matter that ye have it so tenderly to heart, for ye may know well the good speed of that is my welfare, and the contrary is my utter undoing.

I have sent to John Porter to weet verily how it standeth with him, as ye shall weed the certainty this week; as for the matter written to John Bocking he hath rad (*read*) his letter, and will remember your desire, and also of William Jenney's coming, in case he know of it rather than ye.

And my master heard the substance of your letter read, and liked it right well; and

as for the matter of Worcester's remembrance, he shall give his attendance thereto in that he can.

And where ye call him master, he is displeased with that name, for he may spend 5s. yearly more by the name of Worcester or Botoner, and by his master not a farthing in certainty, he prayeth you (*to*) forget it.

I pray God keep you. Written at Caister, hastily, the 2nd day of September.

Your own

T. HOWES.

Item, in case Jankyn be whole [*well*] my Lord of Norfolk hath granted (*him*) by mean of Robert Wingfield to be in my said lord's household, as my master hath it by letter from Wingfield.

Caister, 2d of September,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXX.—(XLI. vol. i. p. 165.)

We here see the anxiety of an old man, wishing, according to the superstition of the time, to be permitted to found a college to the health of his soul, and his future happiness. [The impediments of which he complains arose from the very judicious law, called the Statute of Mortmain, to prevent lands from becoming inalienable in corporations, and which, under certain modifications, still exists. Sir John's intentions were not effected.]

To the worshipful, and my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston, at the Temple, or to William Barker, at Southwark, be this delivered.

WORSHIPFUL cousin, I commend me to you, and whereas I late wrote unto you, in a letter

by Henry Hansson, for the foundation of my college; I am sore set thereupon; and that is

the cause I write now, to remember you again to move my Lords of Canterbury¹ and Winchester² for the licence to be obtained, that I might have the amortizing without any great fine; in recompense of my long service continued and done unto the king and to his noble father, whom God assoil, and never yet guerdoned (*recompensed*) or rewarded.

And now since I have ordained to make the king founder, and ever to be prayed for; and for his right noble progenitors, his father and uncles, methinketh I should not be denied of my desire, but the rather to be remembered and sped.

Wherefore, as I wrote unto you, I pray you acquaint me and you, for the rather speed hereof,³ with a chaplain of my Lord of Canterbury, that in your absence may remember me, and in likewise with my Lord Chancellor; for seeing the king's disposition, and also his, unto the edifying of God's service, it might in no better time be moved, &c.

My Lord of Norfolk is removed from Framlingham on foot to go to Walsingham, and daily I wait that he would come hither.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister, 18th of November,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXI.—(XLII. vol. i. p. 167.)

[This letter curiously illustrates the preceding.] It is a generally received opinion that the priests were the most exorbitant in their demands on every occasion; but here it seems otherwise, for the king (*or his ministers*) required 500 marks for a licence for every 100 marks [annual rent?] that were intended to be settled in mortmain. It appears, however, by this letter, that contracts might be made with the abbots, &c. on much more moderate terms, for the performance of masses, &c., and equally secure, even without the king's licence. We are here informed that a demand had been made upon the executors of Lady Abergavenny of nearly as much money, for a licence to found, as it actually took to found a service for her.

To my right worshipful uncle, and my right good master, Sir John Fastolf, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful uncle, and my right good master, I recommend me to you with all my service.

And, Sir, my brother Paston and I have communed together as touching to your college⁴ that ye would have made, and, Sir, it is too great a good (*sum*) that is asked of you for your licence; for they ask for every 100 marks that ye would amortise (*settle by the statute of mortmain*) 500 marks, and will give it no better cheap (*grant no better bargain*.)

And, Sir, I told my brother Paston, that my Lady Abergavenny⁵ hath in diverse abbeyes in Leicestershire seven or eight priests singing for her perpetually, by my brother Darcy's and my uncle Brokesby's means, for they were her executors; and they accorded (*agreed*) for money, and gave a 200 or 300 marks, as they might accord (*agree*), for a priest.

And for the surety⁶ that he should sing in the same abbey for ever, they had manors of good value bounden to such persons as pleased the said brethren, Brokesby, and my brother Darcy, that the said service should be kept.

And for little more than the king asked them for a licence, they went through with the said abbots.

And I hold this way as sure as that other; ye may commune with your counsel thereof.

And if there be any service that I may do for you, it shall be ready at all times with the grace of God, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 17th day of July.

Your nephew and servant,

HENRY FYLUNGLEY.⁷

London, 17th of July,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

¹ Thomas Bourchier.

² William de Wainfleet.

³ [i. e. make acquaintance, for you and me, for the greater speed hereof, with a chaplain, &c.]

⁴ This is the college which Sir John Fastolf intended to have founded at Caister, by Yarmouth, in Norfolk.

⁵ Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester, (son and heir of William Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny,) and wife of Sir Edward Nevile, a younger son of Ralph, first Earl of

Westmorland, who by this marriage was summoned as Lord Bergavenny in 1450.

⁶ This is a curious fact, as it shows us how security was given by the abbays, &c. to the parties contracting for a mass or service, that it should be continued for ever in the same abbey, &c.

⁷ He appears from other letters to have been a lawyer, and was connected with the Pastons, &c. by marriage. This letter was written during the latter part of the life of Sir John Fastolf, perhaps not long before his death, which happened in 1459.

LETTER CXXII.—(XLIII. vol. i. p. 171.)

This letter is chiefly curious for the account which it gives us of William Worcester's attention to learning and fondness for poetry and books. We find, too, that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Bourchier, pursued the diversion of hunting, &c.

To my full special good master, John Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my full special good master, after humble recommendation, please it you to understand, that such service as I can do to your pleasure, as to mine understanding, I have showed my diligence now this short season since your departing, and in special about such a copy of a foundation,¹ as your mastership commanded me to get you a copy of; of the which I send unto you at this time, by my brother William Worcester, three copies written by Luket, because I had no leisure, but so much business in setting forth of my Master of the Rolls; at this time, and in all this king's days, ye can have none other according [agreeing] anything to your intent.

And as for the names of the Poles, William hath more writing than ye and I could find, found by labour made by him and me.

And also, Sir, he hath caused me to examine old and many records written by some Frenchman concerning the manor of Dedham, that was a cumbrous labour, for these copies were full defective, as it appeareth by the correcting of them.

Item, Sir, I may say to you, that William hath gone to school, to a Lumbard called Karoll Giles, to learn and to be read in poetry, or else in French, for he hath been with the same Karoll every day two times or three; and hath bought divers books of him, for the which as I suppose he hath put himself in danger (*debt*) to the same Karoll.

I made a motion to William to have known part of his business, and he answered and

said that he would be as glad and as feyn² of a good book of French, or of poetry, as my master Fastolf would be to purchase a fair manor; and thereby I understand he list not to be communed withal in such matters.

Item, Sir, as for any tidings, William can tell you here at London are but full few, but Henry Bourchier is dead suddenly at Ludlow; my Lord of Canterbury and my Lord Bourchier³ shall be this week at Hunsdon, and hunt and sport them with Sir William Oldhall.

At this time, nothing else to your mastership, but and it please you to remember my master⁴ at your best leisure, whether his old promise shall stand, as touching my preferring to the Boar's Head in Southwark; Sir, I would have been at another place, and of my master's own motion he said that I should set up in the Boar's Head, in the which matter I report me to William Worcester, Bocking and William Barker, and most specially to my master's own remembrance; I know full well there can no conclusion be taken to mine avail without help of your mastership, unto the which I utterly submit me in this and in all other; and our Lord Jesu preserve you and all yours, and send you your heart's desire with right.

Written at London on Sunday next after Saint Bartholomew's day in haste.

By your servant,

HENRY WYNDESORE.

London, Sunday, August,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIII.—(LXXX. vol. iii. p. 325.)

In this letter we have an account of reparations and alterations making in their house, with a description of their bed-chamber, and its furniture.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare;

praying you to weet that Sir Thomas Howes hath purveyed four dormants (*beams*)⁵ for the

¹ For Sir J. Fastolf's college at Caister.

² [Fain—desirous.]

³ In 1461 he was created Earl of Essex.

⁴ [He was one of Sir J. Fastolf's household.]

⁵ [Probably the beams now technically called sleepers.]

drawte¹ chamber, and the malthouse, and the brewery, whereof he hath bought three, and the fourth, that shall be the longest and greatest of all, he shall have from Heylesdon, which he saith my master Fastolf shall give me, because my chamber shall be made therewith. As for the laying of the said dormants, they shall be laid this next week because of the malthouse, and as for the remanent I trow it shall abide 'till ye come home, because I can neither be purveyed of posts nor of boards not yet.

I have taken the measure in the drawte chamber, there as ye would your coffers and your countewery² should be set for the while, and there is no space beside the bed, though the bed were removed to the door, for to set both your board and your coffers there, and to have space to go and sit beside; wherefore I have purveyed that ye shall have the same drawte chamber that ye had before, whereas ye shall lye to yourself; and when your gear is removed out of your little house, the door shall be locked, and your bags laid in one of the great coffers, so that they shall be safe, I trust.

Richard Charles and John Dow have fetched home the child³ from Rockland Tofts, and it is a pretty boy; and it is told me that Will is at Blickling with a poor man of the town: a young woman that was some time with Burton of this town sent

me word thereof; I pray you send me word if ye will that anything that ye will be done to him ere ye come home. Richard Charles sendeth you word that Willes hath been at him here, and offered him to make him estate in all things according to their indenture, and if he do the contrary ye shall soon have word.

My mother prayeth you for to remember my sister, and to do your part faithfully ere ye come home to help to get her a good marriage;⁴ it seemeth by my mother's language that she would never so fain to have be delivered of her as she will now.

It was told here that Knivet, the heir, is for to marry; both his wife and child be dead, as it was told here; wherefore she would that ye should inquire whether it be so or no, and what his livelihood is, and if ye think that it be for to do, to let him be spoken with thereof.

I pray you that ye be not strange of writing of letters to me betwixt this and that ye come home, if I might I would have every day one from you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich on the Tuesday next after the conversion (of) Saint Paul. (25 January.)

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Tuesday,
January, sometime before
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIV.—(LXXXI. vol. iii. p. 329.)

The dutiful address of Elizabeth Poynings, daughter of Sir William and Agnes Paston, to her mother, and the handsome manner in which she speaks of her husband, would do honour to a modern daughter and wife; and the anxiety she shows that her husband might be able to discharge his sureties is both pleasing and commendable. In 1457, when unmarried, she lived with Lady Pole, as appears from Letter cvii. p. 82. She had been now lately married to Robert Poynings, or Poynings, whom she survived, and afterwards married Sir George Browne, of Beechworth Castle, in Surrey, and was living in 1485.

To my right worshipful mother, Agnes Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and my most entirely-beloved mother, in the most lowly manner I recommend me unto your good motherhood, beseeching you daily and nightly of your

motherly blessing, evermore desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, the which I pray God to continue and increase to your heart's desire; and if it liked your good

¹ What the word drawte means, when applied to a chamber, I am not certain.

² Countewery must mean his counter, desk, or board to sit and write, &c., at.

³ The child now brought home seems to have been at nurse at Rockland Tofts.

⁴ The marriage of his sister Elizabeth was an object of great consequence to his mother, as those two did not, from many things which occur, agree properly together; but I cannot ascertain, from the pedigree of the family of Knivet, which of them is here meant.

motherhood to hear of me and how I do at the making of this letter, I was in good hele (*health*) of body, thanked be Jesu; and as for my master, my best beloved that ye call, and I must needs call him so now, for I find none other cause, and as I trust to Jesu none shall, for he is full kind unto me, and is as busy as he can to make me sure of my jointure, where-to he is bound in a bond of a thousand pounds to you mother, and to my brother John, and to my brother William, and to Edmund Clere,¹ the which needed no such bond; wherefore, I beseech you good mother, as our most singular trust is in your good motherhood, that my master, my best beloved, fail not of the hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) at the beginning of this term, which ye promised him to his marriage, with the remanent of the money of father's will; for I have promitted (*promised*) faithfully to a gentleman called Bain, that was one of my best beloved's sureties, and was bound for him in two hundred pounds, of which he rehearseth for to receive at the beginning of this term one hundred and twenty pounds, and if he fail

thereof at this time he will claim the whole of us, the which were to us too great an hurt; and he cannot make an end with none of his other sureties without this said silver, and that can my brother John tell you well enough and it lusteth (*listeth*) him to do so, and in all other things. As to my Lady Pool, with whom I sojourned, that ye will be my tender and good mother that she may be paid for all the costs done to me before my marriage; and to Christopher Houson, as ye wrote unto my brother John that it should have been so; and that it please your good motherhood to give credence to William Worcester; and Jesu for his great mercy save you! Written at London, the Wednesday the 3rd day of January.

By your humble daughter,
ELIZABETH PONYNGS.

Elizabeth ponyngs

London,
Wednesday,
3d January, 1458-9. 37 H. VI.

LETTER CXXV.—(LXXXII. vol. iii. p. 333.)

[THIS letter from Hugh a Fenne in London to J. Paston in Norwich, dated March 1, 1458-9, contains details and instructions relative to Sir J. Fastolf's law business, which the writer wishes were concluded, that he might "have the better leisure to dispose himself

godly, and beset (*ordain*) his lands and his goods to the pleasure of God, and the weal of his soul, that all men may say he dieth a wise man and a worshipful:" it possesses nothing else of interest.]

LETTER CXXVI.—(LXXXIII. vol. iii. p. 337.)

We see here a plain, manly, and sensible letter from a son, who, by some misconduct, had given his father offence: his sorrow for having done amiss is properly expressed, and his promises for future amendment appear to be sincere. The offence seems to have been some personal ill behaviour to his father, if we may judge from what he says here, and from what his mother mentions in a letter to J. Paston in the following month (see Letter cxviii.). This is the first letter in this collection from John, afterwards Sir John Paston, knight.

To my right worshipful father, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered in hasty wise.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, in the most lowly wise I commend me to your good fatherhood, beseeching you of your blessing; might it please your fatherhood to remember and consider the pain and heaviness that it hath

been to me since your departing out of this country, here abiding till the time it please you to show me grace, and till the time that by report my demeaning be to your pleasing; beseeching you to consider that I may not nor have no mean to seek you as I ought to do, saving under this form, which I beseech you be not taken to no displeasure, nor am

¹ Edmund Clere was the second son of John Clere, Esq., of Ormesby, and died in 1463.

not of power to do anything in this country for worship or profit of you, nor ease of your tenants which might and should be to your pleasing; wherefore I beseech you of your fatherly pity to tender the more this simple writing; as I shall out of doubt hereafter do that shall please you to the uttermost of my power and labour; and if there be any

Norwich, Monday, 5th of March,
1458-9. 37 H. VI.

service that I may do, if it please you to command me, or if I may understand it, I will be as glad to do it as anything earthly, if it were anything that might be to your pleasing. And no more, but Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written at Norwich, the 5th day of March.

By your older son, JOHN PASTON.

*My young & beloved
John Paston*

LETTER CXXVII.—(LXXXIV. vol. iii. p. 339.)

As this is the only letter in this collection written by Sir John Fastolf to a man of superior rank to himself, I have given it, that his manner of expressing himself in such a situation may be seen. The letter has no direction, having been originally enclosed in a cover, but by the contents is plainly intended for the Duke of Norfolk, his "castle of Framlingham" being mentioned. The time of its being written, too, can be nearly ascertained, Sir John mentioning not only his age, but, in the part that is intended to be erased, his infirmities likewise, we may therefore conclude that it was written in the last year of his life.

RIGHT high and mighty prince, my right noble and good lord, in my right humble wise I recommend me to your good grace, and for the noble lordship and supportation showed unto me at all times, I beseech our Lord God guerdon (*reward*) you, whereas I may not, but only as your daily and continual beadsman now in mine age pray for the good prosperity of your right high and noble estate, as I am greatly bound to do; praying tenderly your highness to continue your good lordship and supportation in the matters touching your servant John Porter, and my poor chaplain Sir Thomas Howes, trusting verily to God, that with the supportation of your good lordship, their matters shall yet come to a good conclusion in punishing of perjury and embracery¹ that many years hath been and yet is used in this shire, which were great merit, and, to my conceit, in you that are so noble a prince, a singular renown, as for the best deed that may be done for the weal of both shires.

And in like wise that it please your right good grace to continue your noble favour and supportation to me in remedying the force done by Sir Philip Wentworth, keeping

now wrongful possession of certain lands in Suffolk, nigh your castle of Framlingham, which lands certain of my friends, to my use,² have of the king's grant by his letters patent before any patent that the said Sir Philip hath, which is my singular matter in mine own part that I have now to do, as my cousin Paston can inform your lordship, for he knoweth the matter and mine whole intent, to whom your good grace like to give credence, he cometh to await upon your lordship at this time, as I understand by my cousin, your servant Richard Southwell, your lordship desired (*this is scratched out, but legible, "and to pardon me for necessity causeth me, in as moche as I may not come in myn owne p'sone as my will were."*)

Right high and mighty prince, my noble and right good lord, I beseech the Holy Ghost be with you, and evermore send you the accomplishment of your right noble desires to his pleasure and yours.

Written at my poor place of Caister, the second day of April.

Your humble man and servant,

JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
2nd of April,
about 1459. 37 H. VI.

¹ [Embracery is an attempt to influence a jury corruptly, and was punishable by fine and imprisonment under several statutes of Edw. IV. See Blackstone's Com., b. iv. c. 10.]

² Use in original; Fenn translates, by mistake, *ease*.

LETTER CXXVIII.—(XLIV. vol. i. p. 175.)

We see in this letter the method of raising men was by sending a letter under the Privy Seal, and sometimes signed by the king himself, commanding the attendance of the persons named, at a certain time and place, with *meu*, &c., according to their degree. These privy seals seem to have been issued in April, 1459, when the king, &c., were at Coventry, raising an army to oppose the Duke of York and the Earl of Salisbury. And if J. Paston's son herein mentioned was his eldest, he might then be about eighteen or twenty years of age.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you; pleaseth you to weet that on Thursday last was, there were brought unto this town many privy seals, and one of them was indorsed to you, and to Hastyngs, and to five or six other gentlemen; and another was sent unto your son, and indorsed to himself alone, and assigned (*signed*) within with the king's own hand; and so were but few that were sent as it was told me; and also there were more special terms in his than were in others; I saw a copy of those that were sent unto other gentlemen; the intent of the writing was, that they should be with the king at Leicester the 10th day of May, with as many persons defensibly arrayed as they might according to their degree, and that they should bring with them for their expenses for two months.

As for the letter that was indorsed to you, and to others, it was delivered to William Yelverton, for there appeared no more of the remulaunt (*remaining*).

Hastyngs is furth into Yorkshire; I pray you that ye vouchsafe to send word in haste how ye will that your son be demeaned herein. Men think here, that be your well-willers, that ye may no less do than to send him forth.

As for his demeaning since ye departed, in good faith, it hath been right good, and lowly, and diligent, in oversight of your servants and other things, the which I hope ye would have been pleased with and ye had been at home; I hope he will be well demeaned to please you hereafterward.

He desired Arblaster to bemoan¹ to you for him; and was right heavy of his demeaning to you, as I sent you word also by Arblaster how I did to him after that ye were gone; and I beseech you heartily that ye vouchsafe to be his good father, for I hope he is chastised, and will be the worthier hereafter.

As for all other things at home, I hope that I and others shall do our part therein as well as we may; but as for money it cometh but slowly, and God have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

Written in haste at Norwich on the Sunday next before the Ascension day.²

Sir, I would be right glad to hear some good tidings from you.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Sunday, 29 April,
1459. 37 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIX.—(LXXXV. vol. iii. p. 343.)

This letter appears to have been written not long before the death of Sir John Fastolf, which happened in November, 1459. He expresses in it his anxiety for the settlement of his estate at Caister for the purposes of

religion, and wishes much for the presence of his cousin Paston. The language is a mixture of Latin and English. [It is written by Dr. John Brackley to J. Paston.]

¹ [*Femene* in original; more probably *be mean* to you—mediator to you.]

² In 1459, 37 Hen. VI., Whitsunday was the 13th of May; Ascension day the 3d of May; the Sunday

before, the 29th of April; and the Thursday before that, the 26th. These dates will agree with the time mentioned in the privy seals for their attendance.

LETTER CXXX.—(LXXXVI. vol. iii. p. 347.)

This letter was written after the dispersion of the Duke of York's army near Ludlow, in October, 1459, as the transactions here related refer to the direction of state affairs when in the hands of Henry's friends. Commissions were granted to James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire, and Thomas, Lord Scales, and others, to apprehend all those who had been concerned in the late rebellion, and to punish them according to law. It appears here that J. Paston was supposed to favour the York party, and from the expressions contained in Dr. Brackley's letters he certainly did so.

BROTHER JOHN BRACKLEY, the son of John Brakle, a dyer, was born at Norwich, and, about the year 1418, 6 H. V., entered when very young into the Convent of the Grey Friars, or Friars Minors, at Norwich; he afterwards took a doctor's degree in divinity, and became a famous preacher. He was an intimate friend of and chaplain to Sir John Fastolf, who appointed him one of his executors; he was also much connected with the Paston family, being chaplain to the judge, and tutor to Sir John Paston his grandson. He died in the year 1461 or 1462, and was buried in the church of his own convent. The style and language of his letters here produced are very different from those of the other writers of this period here brought together, as they abound with quotations from the Old and New Testament, and are often intermixed with sentences in Latin of his own composition. I have endeavoured to give these letters to the reader as accurately as possible, but in two or three places I have been obliged to omit a sentence or two, as the contractions, added to the smallness and confusedness of the hand-writing, have made them so illegible, that after the most careful attention and examination, I have been forced to give up the deciphering; and I have likewise referred the reader to the places whence the quotations are taken.

Carissimo suo magistro, Johanni Paston, Armigroe.

Jesus, Maria, &c.

RIGHT reverend master and most trusty friend in earth, as lowly as I can or may I recommend me, &c.

Sir, in faith I was sore afraid that ye had a great letting, that ye came not on Wednesday to meet, &c., by my faith and (*if*) ye had been here ye should have had right good cheer, &c.; and have fared right well after your pleasure, &c., with more, &c.

Sir John Tatteshall is at one with Heydon, &c., and Lord Scales hath made a loveday¹ with the prior and Heydon in all matters, except the matter of Snoring, &c. And the said prior spake masterly to the jurors, &c., and told them and (*if*) they had dreaded God and hurt of their souls, they would have some instruction of the one party as well as of the other, but they were so bold, they were not afraid, for they found no bones to say in their verdict as Thomas Todenham and John Heydon would, &c.

A lewd doctor of Ludgate preached on Sunday fortnight at Paul's, charging the people that no man should pray for these lords traytors,² &c., and he had little thank, as he was worthy, &c., and for his lewd de-

meaning his brethren are had in the less favour at London, &c. Dr. Pinchbeck and Dr. Westhawe, great preachers and parsons at London, be now late made monks of Charter-house at Sheen, one at the one place and another at the other place, &c.

The chancellor³ is not good to these lords, &c., for he feareth the Earl of March will claim by inheritance the Earldom of Ha ⁴ &c., of which matter I heard great speech in Somersetshire, &c.

Wyndham, Heydon, Todenham, Blake, W. Chamberleyne, and Wentworth have late commissions to take for traytors and send to the next gaol all persons fautours (*favourers*) and well-willers to the said lords, &c. Master Radcliff and ye have none of commissions directed to you, &c., for ye be holden favourable, &c.

Wyndham and Heydon be named here causers of these commissions, &c.

On Monday last at Cromer⁵ was the oar and the books of registry of the admiralty taken away from my Lord Scales's men by a great multitude of my Lord Roos's men, &c. the Lord Scales is to my Lord Prince, &c. to wait on him, &c. he saith, per Deum

¹ Lofedays, or lovedays, were days on which arbitrations were made, and differences settled amongst neighbours.

² We have here an instance of the pulpit being used for political purposes, and the lords here meant were the Earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury, and others in the Duke of York's interest.

³ William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester.

⁴ The original letter is here defective.

⁵ Cromer is a sea-port, on the north part of the Norfolk coast, where the Court of Admiralty appears to have been held by the Lord Scales, as Lord Admiral of the county. The Lord Roos here mentioned was most probably in the opposite interest.

sinctum, as we say here, he shall be admiral, or he shall lye thereby, &c., by my faith here is a coisy (*unsettled*) word (*world*). Walsham of Chancery that never made leasing (*lying*), told me that Bocking was with my Lord Chancellor this term, but I asked not how many times, &c.

As I have written to you often before this, "Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis," (*Luke xvi. 9.*)

Thomas Todenham, Johannes Heydon, et J. Wyndham cum cæteris magistris Fastolf fallacibus famulis magnam gerunt ad vos invidiam, quod excelleritis eos in bonis, &c. Judas non dormit, &c. "Noli zelare facientes iniquitatem quoniam tanquam fenum velociter arescent, et quemadmodum olera herbarum cito per Dei gratiam decident." Ideo sic in Psalmo, "Spera in Domino et fac bonitatem, et pascēris in divitiis ejus et delec-

tare in Domino et dabit tibi petitiones cordis tui." (*Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2, 3, 4.*) "Et aliter. Jacta cogitatum tuum in domino, & ipse te enutriet." (*Psal. lv. 22.*) "Utinam inquit apostolus abscondantur qui vos conturbant," &c. (*Gal. v. 12.*) "Et alibi, cavete vos a malis et importunis hominibus." (*2 Thess. iii. 2.*)

Precor gratiosum Deum qui vos et me creavit et suo pretioso sanguine nos redemit, vos vestros et vestra gratiose conservet in prosperis, et gratiosius dirigat in agendis.

Scriptum, Walsham feria 4^a in nocte cum magnâ festinatione, &c. Utinam iste mundus malignus transiret et concupiscentia ejus. Vester ad vota promptissimus.

FRATER JOHANNES BRACKLEY,
Minorum Minimus.

Walsham, Norfolk, Wednesday,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXI.—(LXXXVII. vol. iii. p. 353.)

We have in this letter an account of the proceedings on the death of that renowned knight and valiant soldier Sir John Fastolf, relative to his effects. After his return and settlement in his native country, he became a great builder; and at Caister are still to be seen such magnificent remains of his seat or castle, as even now do testify its former state and grandeur: it was a square building of brick, coped with freestone, each side of it being about 300 feet long, having a large and lofty tower at each corner, one of which was a few years ago standing almost entire. The hall, we are informed, was 59 feet long, and 28 broad; the whole was surrounded by a moat, and was a place in those days of strength and defence, having, in the year 1469, 9 E. IV., sustained a siege by the Duke of Norfolk, &c. After the death of Sir John Fastolf, this was for several generations the seat of the Paston family; and so continued until Clement Paston, Esq., in the reign of Elizabeth, built Oxnead-hall, which then becoming their chief place of residence, this noble mansion began to be neglected. He likewise built a splendid house in Yarmouth, and a palace in Southwark. At length, being nearly eighty-three years of age, and as he says of himself in his will, dated 4th Nov., 1459, "in good remembrance albeit greatly vexed with sickness, and through age infebelyd," he departed this life, without issue, on Monday the 5th of November, 1459, 38 H. VI., at his manor of Caister, and was most sumptuously buried in the conventual church of St. Bennet in the Holm, in Norfolk, under the arch of the new chapel which he had lately rebuilt there, on the south side of the choir or chancel, under a marble tomb by the body of Dame Millicent his wife, [who died about 24 or 25 Hen. VI., and whose son Stephen Scrope, by her first marriage, succeeded to her estates in Wiltshire and Yorkshire.] When we consider this our worthy knight, as sprung from an ancient and honourable family, inheriting ample fortunes, but immensely increasing them through a long, laborious, and indefatigable life, spent in the service of his country, and acquiring riches at the cost of its enemies only; acting in a very high and exalted sphere, renowned for his courage and conduct in the field, and his abilities in the council, dispersing the fruits of his riches by his magnificent buildings and hospitality in his lifetime, and at his death devising the capital itself for almost every purpose he could think of useful to the public, can we help exclaiming, "Thou hast founded the fair fabric of thy fame upon a rock to last for ages?" [Whether Sir J. Fastolf deserved the character here given of him, the reader can partly judge. In the memoirs of him in the *Biographia Britannica*, written by Oldys, and revised and corrected by Gough, this praise is greatly transcended. It is there said, "As his valour made him a terror in war, his humanity made him a blessing in peace; all we can find in his retirement being elegant, hospitable, and generous, either as to the places of his abode, or those persons and foundations on which he showered his bounty. The streams of his treasure that fed this fountain of his munificence were numerous and plentiful, as may be seen by the jury's return to the writ of inquiry into the lands and estates whereof he was possessed at his death, in Norfolk, Suffolk, Yorkshire, and Wiltshire." To us this eulogy seems greatly in excess. He appears to have been a brave, active, and very careful man, but by no means generous, as is shown in several passages of his own letters and of others relating to him in these columns. He had no doubt large estates, and, being childless, he bequeathed great part of them to charitable or rather superstitious purposes, giving little while he lived, and endeavouring to effect his last object at as small a cost as he could. We have already alluded to the

improbability of Shakspeare having had any reference to this somewhat common-place old soldier in depicting the character of his immortal Falstaff. Independently of the fact that the character was originally written under the name of Sir John Oldcastle, there is nothing in common between the two, not anything to lead to such a conclusion, except the similarity of the names, and the fact of Falstaff being contemporary with Henry V., of whom he was, however, only about ten or twelve years the elder, and whom he outlived many years. But as the subject has excited much attention, it may not be uninteresting to give a slight sketch of the life of Falstaff here.

Sir John Fastolf was born of an ancient and respectable family in Norfolk, either at Caister or Yarmouth, about 1377, and is said to have been a page in the service of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and afterward to have held a considerable post under Thomas, subsequently Duke of Clarence, who, as early as the 2nd Hen. IV. (1401), was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whither Fastolf accompanied him, and where he married, in 1409, Milicent, Lady Castlecomb, daughter and heiress of Robert Lord Tibetot, and widow of Sir Stephen Scrope. Not long after his marriage we find him engaged in the wars of France, and, in 1413, the 1st of Hen. V., he was made governor of the castle of Veires in Gascony. On the taking of Harfleur by Henry V., in August, 1415, he was appointed to its command under the Duke of Exeter, but in the following October we find him dangerously engaged in the battle of Agincourt; in the same year, he and the Duke of Exeter having made a plundering expedition almost as far as Rouen, were surprised and forced to retreat by the enemy, but at length succeeded in totally defeating them; and when the constable of France laid siege to Harfleur, it was gallantly defended by Fastolf until relieved by the Duke of Bedford. He was actively engaged throughout the war during the life of Henry V., and his services seem to have been very well paid, being also made a Knight of the Garter about the end of 1417. Under the regency of the Duke of Bedford Sir John was Grand Master of his Household, and Seneschal of Normandy, and was very active and successful in his warlike enterprises. In 1424, at the battle of Verneuil, he took the Duke of Alençon prisoner, for whose ransom 200,000 crowns were paid, and for the payment of his share of which, as has been seen, Sir John was very urgent. In 1425, among other places, he took the castle of Sillie-le-Guillem, from which he received the title of baron. In 1428, during the siege of Orleans, he was despatched by the commander, the Duke of Suffolk, to the regent at Paris for supplies, of which the army were in great want; he was provided therewith, and also with a considerable force to convoy them safely to Orleans. The French, aware of his movements, attacked him on his return, but were totally defeated with a loss in killed, it is said, much exceeding the total of his force, besides prisoners and wounded. From the nature of the provisions he was conveying—barrels of herrings—this encounter was called by the French the Battle of Herrings. In 1429 the English were defeated with great loss in the battle of Patay, and though Fastolf succeeded in bringing safely off a considerable part of the army, yet his retreat, though conducted with great ability, seems to have given rise to some imputations on his character; it being even said that he was divested of his knighthood. It is upon this occurrence, and under his real name, that Shakspeare dilates in the first part of Henry VI. Sir John Fastolf, from these letters appears to have had so little chivalry in his composition that it is no wonder he became unpopular, even by his prudence, when contrasted with the Talbots and Bedfords of his time, though by no means liable to the imputations of either cowardice or treachery. Hall says, "the Duke of Bedford took from him the image of St. George and his Garter, though afterwards, by means of friends and apparent causes of good excuse, the same were to him again delivered, against the mind of the Lord Talbot." According to Anstis (Hist. of the Order of the Garter), his name was never erased from the list of knights. At any rate, his disgrace was but temporary, as in 1430 he was appointed by the regent to the command of Caen in Normandy. In 1432 he was sent ambassador to the Council of Basle, and immediately afterward, in the same capacity, to negotiate a peace or a truce with France; and again in 1435. In the latter end of this year the Duke of Bedford died, and Sir John Fastolf was named one of the executors of his will. Richard Duke of York, who succeeded to the regency, had so high an opinion of the merit of Sir John, that he settled an annuity upon him of 20*l.* a-year. For about four years he seems to have continued quietly in his government in Normandy, and in 1440 finally returned to England. He does not appear to have distinguished himself in the domestic politics of his time, although not wholly inactive; and after an illness of nearly five months' duration, he died on the 5th of November, 1459. Of his will and its consequences to the Paston family, we are told something in the foregoing letters, and shall learn more hereafter. The list of his landed estates is very long, but as it contains only their names, without quantity or value, has no general interest. A part of his personality is stated as follows:—In coin, 2643*l.* 10*s.*; gold plate, 10*lbs.*; silver plate, 1225*lbs.*]

To my master, John Paston, in Norfolk.

RIGHT well-beloved brother, I recommend me to you, certifying you that on Friday last was in the morning Worcester and I were come to London by eight of the clock, and we spake with my Lord Chancellor,¹ and I found him well disposed in all things, and

ye shall find him right profitable to you, &c.

And he desired me to write you a letter in his name, and put trust in you in gathering of the goods together, and pray you to do so, and have all his goods out of every place of his, and his own place, wheresoever they were, and lay them secretly where as ye

¹ William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester.

thought best at your assignment, and till that he speak with you himself; and he said ye should have all lawful favour.

I purpose to ride to him this day for writs of *diem clausit extremum*,¹ and I suppose ye shall have a letter sent from himself to you.

As for the goods of Paul's they are safe enough, and this day we have graunt to have the goods out of Bermondsey² without advice of any man saving Worcester, Plomer, and I myself, and nobody shall know of it but we three.

My Lord Treasurer³ speaketh fair, but yet many advise me to put no trust in him; there is laboured many means to intitle the king in his goods. Southwell is escheator, and he is right good and well disposed.

My Lord of Exeter⁴ claimeth title in my master's place, with the appurtenances, in Southwark, and verily had purposed to have entered, and his counsel were with us, and spake with Worcester and me; and now afterwards they have sent us word that they would move my lord to sue by means of the law, &c.

I have spoken with my Lord of Canterbury, and Master John Stokes, and I find them right well disposed both, &c.

Item, to-morrow or the next day ye shall have another letter, for by that time we shall know more than we do now.

My Lord Chancellor would that my master should be buried worshipfully, and one

hundred marks (66*l.* 13. 4*d.*) alms done for him; but this day I shall wholly know his intent; Master John Stokes hath the same conceit and alms giving.

Harry Fenyingley is not in this town, nor the Lord Beauchamp.

Item, we have gotten men of the spiritual law withholden with us, what case soever happen; we have Master Robert Kent; but in anywise have all the goods there together, and tarry for no letting, though ye should do it by day-light openly, for it is my Lord Chancellor's full intent that ye should do so.

As for William Worcester he trusteth verily ye would do for him and for his avail in reason, and I doubt not and (if) he may verily and faithfully understand you so disposed to him ward, ye shall find him faithful to you; in likewise I understand by him he will never have other master but his old master, and to my conceit it were pity but if he should stand in such case by mine master that he should never need service, considering how my master trusted him, and the long years that he hath been with him in, and many shrewd journey for his sake, &c.

I write you no more because ye shall (*have*) another letter written to-morrow. Written at London the 12th day of November in haste.

By WILLIAM PASTON.

London, Monday,
12 Nov., 1459. 28 II. VI.

LETTER CXXXII.—(LXXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 359.)

William Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, the first of Sir John Fastolf's executors, was at this time Lord Chancellor, to whom the others applied for his advice and directions concerning the execution of his will. He here gives them fully, but at the same time advises them to apply to some one learned in the spiritual law concerning the administration, &c. In times of popery the "*Month's Mind*" was a monthly solemnity in memory of the deceased, when prayers were offered and alms given for the health of his soul, &c. William Wainfleet was consecrated Bishop of Winchester in 1447, and continued there till his death, in 1486, just living to see the line of Lancaster (to which he had ever been a well-wisher) restored to the crown in the person of Henry VII. He was a worthy prelate, and a man of great wisdom and integrity. There is no address to these directions.

Be it remembered, that forasmuch as Sir John Fastolf, late deceased, of great affec-

tion, hath put me in trust to be one of his executors, and since it is desired (*of*) me to

This was a writ which issued out of Chancery to the escheator of the county, upon the death of any of the king's tenants in capite, to inquire by a jury of what lands he died seized, and of what value, and who was next heir to him.

² An abbey in Southwark, where some of his goods were deposited.

³ James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond. [In orig. "*brod* [*brother*] *tr'sorer*," probably an error in transcribing, and the translation is right.]

⁴ Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter.

know my disposition herein, mine advice is thus, that first an inventory be made wholly of his goods and catell (*chattells*) in all places, and that they be laid in sure ward by your discretions, till the executors, or the most part of those that he put his great trust upon, speak with me, and make declaration to me of his last will, to the accomplishment whereof I will be special good lord.

Furthermore, as touching his burying and month's mind keeping, that it be done worshipfully (*worshipfully*) according to his degree, and for the health of his soul, and that alms be given in masses saying, and to poor people,

to the sum of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) till that otherwise we speak together; and I can agree right well that his servants have their rewards betimes according to his will, to the intent that they may be better disposed, and to pray for the welfare of his soul; taking advice of a learned man in spiritual law for the charge of administration till the executors come together, or the most part, that his trust was most upon, to take the administration.

WILLIAM WINTON.

November or December,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXIII.—(XLV. vol. i. p. 179.)

This letter was written at Coventry, where the parliament appears to have met, after the desertion of some and the surrender of others of the Duke of York's troops to the army of Henry VIth, commanded by the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, near Ludlow, in October, 1459; and though it contains chiefly accounts of a private nature, yet as a list of those there attainted is affixed, it seemed worthy of insertion.

To my right worshipful masters, William Yelverton, justice, John Paston, and Henry Filongley,¹ and to each of them.

RIGHT worshipful Sirs, I recommend me to you; and like it you to weet that my Lord Chancellor is a right good and tender lord in all your matters, and so will continue; and my Lord Treasurer in likewise, which both have answered Wyndham not aldermost (*altogether*) to his pleasure, because of his noiseful language; saying how he might have no law, and that my Lord Chancellor was not made executor but for maintenance,² with many other words nothing profitable nor furthering his intents. As for any particular matters, the parliament, as yet, abideth upon the great matters of attainder and forfeiture; and so there be many and diverse particular bills put in, but none ready, nor touching us, as nigh as we can hearken, to which Playters and I attend daily, trusting on my lords abovesaid, my Lord Privy Seal, and other good lords, and many also of your acquaintance and ours, that and (*if*) anything be, we shall soon have knowledge. The chief justice is right hearty, and sayeth full well and kindly

of my master, whom Jesu for his mercy pardon, and have you in his blessed governance. Written at Coventry the morrow after Saint Nicholas.³ And as to money, I delivered unto the under-treasurer a letter from Master Filongley, and I found him right well disposed to do that may please you in all our matters; and take no money of him as yet, for we have no need to spend any sums as yet, nor with God's grace shall not have. I came to this town of Coventry such day sev'night as the parliament began; and as for such things as I could hearken after, I send to William Worcester a great bill of tidings to show you and all.

Yesterday in the morning came in the Earl of Pembroke⁴ with a good fellowship; and the Duchess of York⁵ came yester evening late, as the bringer hereof shall more plainly declare (*to*) you, to whom ye like to give credence.

The Bishop of Exeter⁶ and the Lord Grey

¹ St. Nicholas's day, 6th of December.

² [This name is spelt in such a variety of forms that it is quite impossible to fix the orthography.]

³ [Maintenance is a law-term, implying a suit or quarrel to the disturbance or hindrance of rights, and if the party is to have any advantage therein, it is called Champerty. There have been many statutes passed against both.]

⁴ Jasper of Hatfield, half-brother to Henry VI., Earl of Pembroke.

⁵ Cicely, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland; she was deprived of all her goods, &c.

⁶ George Nevile, sixth son of Richard Earl of Salisbury, and brother of Richard Earl of Warwick: he was afterwards Archbishop of York.

(of) Ruthin¹ have declared them full worshipfully to the king's great pleasure.

Playters and I (*have*) written you a letter by Norff, yeoman for the king's mouth.

Your

JOHN BOCKING.²

Coventry, 7th of December, 1459.

38 H. VI.

The following list of those of the Duke of York's party who were attainted by parliament is pinned to the above letter:—

The Duc of York.	Therle of Warrwyk.
Therle of Marche.	Therle of Salusbury.
Therle of Rutland.	The Lord Powys.

The Lord Clynton.	Edward Bourghciers sq.
The Countesse of Sarra ³	A broy' of his.
S ^r . Thomas Nevyle.	Thom's Vaugh'n.
S ^r . John Nevyle.	Thom's Colte.
S ^r . Thom's Haryngton.	Thomas Clay.
S ^r . Thom's o' Parre.	John Denham.
S ^r . John Couyers.	Thomas Moryng.
S ^r . John Wenlok.	John Oter.
S ^r . Will'm Oldhall.	Maistr Ric Fisher.

Hastyns and oy' that as yet we can not know y'e names, &c.

As for y'e Lord Powys he come inne and hadde g'ce as for his lyf, but as for hise gods ye forfeiture passid.

LETTER CXXXIV.—(XLVI. vol. i. p. 183.)

John Berney, Esq., appears to have been the son of John Berney, by Isabel, daughter and heir of Sir John Heveningham, knight, and died without issue, in 1461. He had served under Sir John Fastolf, in the wars in France, as appears by a part of this letter where W. Worcester says, "You had verrey and faythfull lofe to my maistr yn the yeers and dayes that ye dyd him s'vice yn the werrs and suffred prysonment and manye a sherp day for hys sake not rewarded."

To the right worshipful Sir, John Berneye, Esq., at Castre being.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you. (*Here follow complaints against Fryer Brakley, &c., concerning Sir John Fastolf's interment, affairs, &c., &c.*)

As to tidings here, I send some off hand, written to you and others, how the Lord Rivers,⁴ Sir Anthony⁴ his son, and others, have won Calais,⁵ by a feeble assault made at Sandwich by Denham, Esquire,⁶ with the number of 800 men, on Tuesday between four and five o'clock in the morning. But my Lady Duchess⁷ is still again received in Kent. The Duke of York is at Dublin, strengthened with his earls and homagers as ye shall see by a bill. God send the king victory of his enemies, and rest and peace amongst his lords!—

I am right greatly heavied for my poor wife for the sorrow she taketh; and must

leave her and her country; I shall nothing take from her more than a little spending-money till better may be. And the blessed Trinity keep and send you health. Written at London hastily the Monday after I departed from you, 1459-60.

Your,

W. BOTONER, called WYRCESTER.

London,
Monday, January,
1459-60. 38 H. VI.

Calais, seems to be meant as a sneer upon him, as he commanded the ships going to the Duke of Somerset with supplies to enable him to drive out the Earl of Warwick from Calais, and take possession of it as governor under the king's commission.

⁶ John Denham, Esq., afterwards Sir John Denham.

⁷ Cicely, Duchess of York.

¹ Edmund Lord Grey, afterwards Earl of Kent.

² John Bocking was in employment under J. Paston.

³ Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Montague, Earl of Salisbury, wife of Richard Nevile, in her right, Earl of Salisbury.

⁴ See notes to the following letter.

⁵ The expression of Lord Rivers, &c., having won

LETTER CXXXV.—(XLVII. vol. i. p. 187.)

This bold plan, for surprising the admiral and taking his fleet, was laid by the Earl of Warwick, &c. at Calais, and executed with success by Sir John Denham, at Sandwich, in January, 1459. Lord Rivers and his son, when prisoners, being only rated by the Lords, shows in them great moderation; as the cruelties usually exercised on prisoners of consequence in the civil wars of those ferocious times would have warranted their immediate execution. [We need not repeat, that, without at all apologising for the cruelties actually committed, we think there were fewer in these "ferocious times," than in any civil war in any other civilised country, except our own at a later period.]

To his right worshipful brother, John Paston, be this letter delivered.

AFTER due recommendation had, please you to weet that we came to London upon the Tuesday by noon next after our departure from Norwich, and sent our men to inquire after my Lord Chancellor,¹ and Mr. John Stokes, and Malmesbury. And as for my Lord Chancellor, he was departed from London, and was rode to the king two days ere we were come to London; and as we understand he hasted him to the king, because of my Lord Rivers being taken at Sandwich, &c.

(Then follows a long account of private business, which is here omitted.)

As for tidings, my Lord Rivers² was brought to Calais and before the lords with eight score torches, and there my Lord of Salisbury rated him, calling him, "Knave's son,"³ that he should be so rude to call him and these other lords traitors; for they should be found the king's true liege men when he should be found a traitor, &c."

And my Lord of Warwick rated him, and said "that his father was but a squire, and brought up with King Henry V., and since

made himself by marriage, and also made a lord; and that it was not his part to have such language of lords being of the king's blood.

And my Lord of March rated him in likewise.

And Sir Anthony⁴ was rated for his language of all the three lords in likewise.

Item, the king cometh to London ward, and as it is said rereth (*raiseth*) the people as he come; but it is certain there be commissions made into diverse shires, that every man be ready, in his best array, to come when the king send for him.

Item, my Lord Roos is come from Guisnes.

No more, but we pray to Jesu have you in his most merciful keeping. Amen.

Written at London the Monday next after St. Paul's day.

Your brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.

London,
Monday, 29th of January,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXVI.—(LXXXIX. vol. iii. p. 361.)

We have here the private letter of a great nobleman, wherein he interests himself in the welfare and happiness of his domestics in a manner so very pleasing, as to show the goodness of his heart, and the kind attention which he paid to those connected with him. [See also to the same effect Letter xlv. p. 53.]

To our right trusty and entirely well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and right entirely well-beloved, we greet you heartily well; and it is so as ye know well yourself, we have and long time have had the service of Thomas Deuyes, by continuance whereof we wend (*thought*) to have had his attendance at our lust (*pleasure*),

and nevertheless we have so straightly examined his demeaning, that we feel and plainly conceive that the love and affection which he hath to a gentlewoman not far from you, and which ye be privy to, as we suppose, causeth him alway to desire towards

¹ Laurence Booth, Bishop of Durham.

² Richard Widville, Lord Rivers, married Jaquetta, daughter of Peter of Luxemburg, Earl of St. Paul, and widow of John, Duke of Bedford, by whom he was father to Elizabeth, the widow of Sir John Gray, and afterwards queen of Edward IV. the now Earl of March, by whom he was created Earl Rivers, &c. He was beheaded in July, 1469, by the Lancastrian mutineers in Northamptonshire.

³ The word knave appears, by this expression, at this time to have been used in a bad sense. [To a nobleman certainly, as it was degradatory of his rank. It is used in the same sense as "his father was but a squire," by Warwick.]

⁴ Sir Anthony Widville, afterwards Lord Scales and Earl Rivers, was beheaded by the tyrannic order of Richard III. at Pontefract, on the 13th of June, 1483.

your country rather than towards such occupation as is behoveful to us. We write therefore to you, praying you heartily as ye love us, that it like you to do that labour at our instance, by such mean as your wisdom can seem, to move that gentlewoman in our behalf for the weal of this matter, undertaking for us that we will show our bounty to them both, if it please her that this matter take effect, so that by reason she shall have cause to take it in gree (*to be satisfied*); and if the

coming thither of our person self should be to (*the*) pleasure of her, we will not leave our labour in that; wherefore we pray you that ye will do your part herein, as ye will we do for you in time coming, and that ye see us in haste. The Holy Trinity keep you. Written at Wivenhoe, the 17th day of May.

The Earl of Oxford.

OXENFORD.

Wivenhoe, in Essex, 17th of May,
before 1460. 38 H. VI.

NUMBER CXXXVII.—(XC. vol. iii. p. 363.)

The matters here commanded by the king to be respited, were probably some disputes relative to the manor of Gresham, a moiety of which had been purchased by Sir William Paston, the judge, and the other moiety had belonged to Sir William Molyns, the present Lord Molyns's wife's ancestor. As far as concerned his lordship, perhaps a respite during his absence on the king's affairs might be necessary, but to extend that to his tenants and servants seems an hardship upon the person who was plaintiff and thought himself aggrieved. The letter, however, is couched in the civilest language possible, and sealed with the king's privy seal on red wax, having the royal arms of France and England quarterly, surmounted by a royal coronet, and encompassed with a collar of SS. [We give it below, together with the king's autograph. This letter appears to be a continuation of the affair noticed in Letters exii. to exv.]

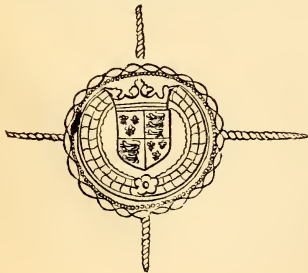
To our trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

BY THE KING.

TRUSTY and well beloved, forasmuch as our right trusty and well-beloved the Lord Molyns is by our special desire and commandment waiting upon us, and now, for divers considerations moving us, we purpose to send him into certain places for to execute our commandments, for the which he ne may (*may not*) be attendant to be in our counties of Norfolk and Suffolk at the time of our commissioners sitting upon our commission of oyer (*and*) determiner within the same our counties. We therefore desire and pray you, that considering his attendance upon us,

and that he must apply him to execute our commandment, ye will respite as for anything attempting against him, as for any matters that ye have to do or say against him, or any other of his servants, well-willers, or tenants, because of him, unto time he shall mowe be (*be able to be*) present to answer thereunto; wherein ye shall minister unto us cause of pleasure, and over that deserve of us right good thanks. Given under our signet at our palace of Westminster, the 18th day of September.

Westminster, 18th of September,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.



7 B

LETTER CXXXVIII.—(XCI. vol. iii. p. 365.)

[Lord Scales was of the party opposed to J. Paston, and we must not therefore accept this accusation against the latter as complete proof of his injustice; but it may rather lead us not to believe in the charges frequently made against other persons opposed to the Paston interests.]

To our trusty and well-beloved friend, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you heartily well, and will ye weet that Wotton is ever crying and calling upon me to write unto you for his land: wherefore at the reverence of God considering the simplicity of them all, I pray you that ye put them at a certain (*certainty*), and let them all that they ought to have of right, for their crying cause men to think ye do them great wrong,

which I wote (*know*) well ye would be sorry to do.

Our Lord have you in his governance. Written at Middleton, the 16th day of October.

Your friend, SCALES.

Middleton,
16th of October,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXIX.—(XCII. vol. p. iii. 367.)

[This letter is a curious instance of the caution (arising from insecurity, at a period when all *news* was only gossip, through the want of a press,) with which information was received. The Duke hesitates to believe the letter from London till he has tested its truth by a circumstance within his reach. The request that the letter be burnt is also singular. The official or semi-official letters appear to have travelled very slowly.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, and please it you to weet of our new tidings here; as this day came writing both to my lord¹ and to my lady from London, that there be certain letters directed to my lord from my lady his Mother,² and divers other lords, for to have Daniel³ in his favour again, and as it is supposed by the means of the Duke of Somerset, for he hath been right conversant with him all this quarter of this year. And also they that sent this writing say plainly that the Lord Scales is good lord to him, and that he hath promised him to make Sir Thomas Todenham, Heydon, and him accorded, and other men in the coun-

try, and that he shall be suffered to enter into Brayston, and keep it, to the extent that the country shall think, and my Lord also,⁴ that he hath great favour amongst the lords of the council, and cause men to fear him the more. Whether it be thus or no I cannot say, nevertheless me thinketh ye shall soon know if Mounford will agree that he shall enter into Brayston, and if that be true, all the remanent shall seem the more likely.

I pray you breame (*burn*) this letter when ye have read it. My lord and my lady say ye shall be right welcome and (*if*) ye will see them this Christmas; I report me to your wisdom, and God have you in his keeping. Written at Framlingham, the 18th day of December.

RICHARD SOUTHWELL.⁵

Framlingham, 18th of December,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.

¹ John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, married Ellenor, daughter of William Bouchier, Earl of Eu, in Normandy.

² Catharine, daughter of Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, and widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

³ Thomas Daniel, Esq. was constable of Rising-castle, and married Margaret, sister of John Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk. He is said to have been attainted in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., but afterwards restored and taken into favour.

⁴ [*i. e.* the Duke of Norfolk.]

⁵ Richard Southwell, Esq. married Amy, daughter and co-heir of Sir Edmund Witchingham, of Wood-Rising, Esq., and so became possessor of that estate.

LETTER CXL.—(L. vol. i. p. 195.)

This letter, written from Framlingham Castle in Suffolk, the ancient seat of the Mowbrays, Dukes of Norfolk, must have been written before 1460, when Viscount Beaumont was slain. It is all of the same hand-writing, and that most probably of the Duchess's secretary, the form of the letters not being like those of a female hand. The matter recorded shows the princely establishment of the households of the nobility in that age; and that they imitated the royal appointments, by having the officers on their own establishments under their letters patent.

To my right worshipful and right entirely well-beloved cousin, the Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful, and right entirely well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you with all my heart, desiring to hear and verily to know of your worshipful estate, profit, health, and good prosperity; the which I beseech our Lord Jesu ever to maintain and preserve in all worship, to his pleasure and to your heart's ease.

Please it you, cousin, to weet, that your well-beloved servant Roger Hunt, and a servant of my most dread lord my husband, one William, yeoman of his ewry,¹ have communed together, and been fully thorough and agreed, that the said William shall have his office,² if it may please your good lordship.

Wherefore, cousin, I pray you, as my special trust is in you, that ye will, at the instance of my prayer and writing, grant by your letters

patent to the said William the foresaid office, with such wages and fees as Roger your said servant hath it of you; trusting verily that ye shall find the said William a faithful servant to you, and can and may do you right good service in that office.

And, cousin, in the accomplishment of my desire in this matter ye may do me a right good pleasure, as God knoweth, whom I beseech for his mercy to have you ever in his blessed governance, and send you good life and long, with much good worship.

Written at Framlingham, the 8th day of March.

ELIANOR, the Duchess of Norfolk.³

Framlingham,
8th of March, before 1460.
39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLI.—(XCH. vol. iii. p. 371.)

The date of this letter cannot be exactly fixed, though I believe it was written in 1460, or, if not then, it must have been written early in the reign of Edward IV., as I find there was a presentation to the church of Drayton both in 1460 and 1461, but Sir Thomas Hakon was not the person presented on either of the vacancies. East Dereham, a market town, situated nearly in the centre of the county of Norfolk, we here find in the fifteenth century a place of sufficient consequence to have an adjournment of the general quarter sessions of the peace from Norwich held in it. It has been since that period twice destroyed by fire; once on the 1st of July, 1581, and again on the 3d of the same month, in 1679. It is now a pleasant, handsome, and well-built town, inhabited by several respectable families, and furnished with many accommodations for genteel life. [East Dereham has maintained its rank from Fenn's time, and is a clean, well-built, and thriving town. Walsingham has been already noticed.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that the cause that I wrote to you none ere [earlier] than I did after the sessions, was because that Yelverton held the sessions at Dereham and

Walsingham the next week after the assizes, and to have knowledge what labour that was made there, and to have sent you word thereof; there was great labour made by the bailiff of Cossey, and other, for to have indicted your men both at Dereham and at

¹ An officer who had the charge of the table-linen, &c.

² It seems by this representation of the matter, as if Roger Hunt, the officer of the Viscount Beaumont, had sold his office under his lordship to William, yeoman of the ewry to the Duke, if, through the Duchess's recommendation, Lord Beaumont should think proper to accept him.

³ Ellenor, Duchess of Norfolk, wife of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, was the daughter of William Bourchier, Earl of Eu, in Normandy, and sister of Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex. The Duke died in 1461, and was buried at Thetford, where his Duchess was likewise buried.

Walsingham, but I purved¹ a mean that their purpose was letted at those two times.

Hugh a Fenn is in Flegg; Richard Calle spake with him this week, and he said to Richard that he and his wife would be with me here this week, towards a place of his that he hath purchased of Godered; if he come I shall make him good cheer, for it is told me of divers folks that have spoken with him, sithen (*since*) he came into Norfolk, as they feel by his saying that he oweth you right good will.

Item, as for my coming to you, if it please you that I come, I hope I shall purvey so for all things ere I come, that it shall be safe enough by the grace of God till I come again; but at the reverence of God, if ye may,² purvey a mean that ye may come home yourself, for that shall be most profitable to you, for "men cut large thongs here off other men's leather." I shall write to you again as hastily as I may. God have you in his keeping. Written in haste at Heylesdon, the Sunday next after the Assumption of our Lady.

Item, my cousin, Elizabeth Clere is at Ormsby, and your mother purposeth to be at her place at Caister this week, for the pestilence³ is so fervent in Norwich that they there no longer abide there, so God help; me thinketh by my mother, that she would right fain that ye did well, and that ye might speed right well in your matters; and me thinketh by my cousin Clere that she would fain have your good will, and that she hath sworn right faithfully to me that there shall no default be found in her, nor nought hath been, if the truth might be understood, as she hoped it shall be hereafter; she saith there is no man alive that she hath put her trust in so much

as she hath done in you: she saith she wot well such language as hath been reported to you of her, otherwise than she hath deserved, causeth you to be otherwise to her than ye should be: she had to me this language weeping, and told me of divers other things, the which ye shall have knowlege of hereafter.

As for the high sheriff he demeaned him right well here to me, and he said to me, as for the replevins he would ask counsel of learned men what he might do therein, and as largely as he might do therein, or in any other matter touching you, saving himself harmless, he would do for you and for yours that he might do.

Item, I have do layd in (*caused to be laid in*) the presentation of Drayton, and have presented Sir Thomas Hakon, parson of Felthorp, the which is held right a good man and well disposed; and the Duke of Suffolk hath laid in another, and there shall be taken an inquisition thereupon, and Master Stephen is your advocate therein.

Master John Estgate is passed to God on Thursday last past, whose soul God assoil! whereof in good faith I am right sorry, for I find him right faithful to you; they die right sore in Norwich.

John Russ saith the profits that hath been taken of the manor of Caister since Sir J. Fastolf died hath been taken by Sir Thomas Howes and Jenney.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,

Sunday after the
Assumption of our Lady,
17th of August, 1460. 38 H. VI.

I marvel that ye had no tidings from me at that time that your letter was written, for I sent you a letter by Chittock's son, that is prentice in London, and the said letter was of the demeaning at the assizes at Norwich, and of divers other matters. I pray you send me word if ye have it: as for the replevins, Richard Calle saith he hath sent you an answer of them, and also the copies of them.

¹ [In original *p'vayd*, purveyed or provided. Fenn translates *played*.]

² [Fenn omits *may*.]

³ I do not find any notice in history that any remarkable sickness raged at this time, either in Norwich or in the kingdom at large.

LETTER CXLII.—(XCIV. vol. iii. p. 377.)

This letter appears to have been written towards the latter end of the reign of Henry VI., and refers to some former transactions when Southwell appears to have been a retainer to the Duke of York. The exact date cannot be ascertained.

To the right reverend and worshipful John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, and my right trusty and well-beloved cousin, I commend me unto you, praying you heartily to remember me unto my master Radcliff, so that by your good means I shall and may have his good mastership, the which I have effectually to my power sued for this three years, and never deserved the contrary to my knowledge, by my truth; and if it can or may be found that I have, I will obey (*submit*) me, and offer me to abide the rule [*decision*] of you and my cousin your brother, &c.

Also my Lord of Canterbury,¹ (*and*) Master Walter Blacket² will help forth, if need be; and as to the remanent of the lords, if the case require that ye may understand by your wisdom they be displeased with me, as I trust to God they be not, I beseech you to remember that I have aforetime been accused unto the king's highness and the queen's for owning my poor good will and service unto my Lord of York and others, &c., whereof I suppose that Thomas Bagham is remembered that I brought him once from my lady a purse and five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*) therein, and to Sir Philip Wentworth another and an hundred shillings therein, for their good will

and advice therein to my lady and all us that were appealed for that cause; notwithstanding the king wrote to my lord, by the means of the Duke of Somerset, that we should be avoided from him, &c. And within this two years we were in like wise laboured against to the queen, so that she wrote to my lord³ to avoid us, saying that the king and she could nor might in no wise be assured of him and my lady as long as we were about him, with much other thing, as may be sufficiently proved by the queen's writing, under her own signet and sign-manual, the which I showed to my Lord of Canterbury and other lords, &c.

I pray you have me excused that I encumber you with these matters at this time, for me thinketh ye should will and desire me to do anything to your honour and pleasure at any time, whereto I shall be ready and well-willed ever to my power, by the grace of God, who have you ever in his keeping, and all yours.

Written at Norwich, on Saint Faith's day, in haste.
Yours, RICHARD SOUTHWELL.

Norwich, 6th of October,
about 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLIII.—(XCV. vol. iii. p. 381.)

Though this letter shows us the influence of the great men in the election of the members of the House of Commons, yet it appears from it that in this case the Duke of Norfolk's power was limited, as he could not bring in his friend and relation Sir John Howard, for I conclude he was the person mentioned in the letter, and his being called a "strange man" most probably arose from his not having been resident in the county, as he was for a long time occupied in the wars of France. He was high-sheriff of the county of Norfolk and Suffolk in the first year of Edward IV., and by him was afterward created Lord Howard. His sovereign, Richard III., granted him the title of Duke of Norfolk, as being descended from the heir-female of the Mowbrays, and, with his royal master, he fell in the battle of Bosworth-field in 1485. [A new parliament was called in October, 1460. If this letter was written *before* 1460, as Fenn says, it must refer to the elections of 1455, referred to in Letters lxxix., lxxx., and lxxxiii., and confirms what we there stated as to the power of noblemen in elections. It is probable, however, that this letter refers only to a vacancy in the representation, and not to a general election, as the letter only mentions one member.]

To my worshipful master, John Paston, Esq.

My worshipful master, I recommend me to you, and I thank you that it pleaseth you to

take such labour for me as ye do: my servant told me ye desired to know what my Lord of Norfolk said to me when I spake of you, and

¹ Thomas Bourchier.

² This family came originally from the bishopric of Durham, and a descendant of it was created a baronet in 1673.

³ John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, in whose household R. Southwell had an appointment.

he said inasmuch as Howard might not be, he would write a letter to the under-sheriff that the shire should have free election, so that Sir Thomas Todenham were not, nor none that was toward the Duke of Suffolk: he said he knew ye were never to him ward; ye may send to the under-sheriff, and see my lord's letter;¹ Howard was as wode (*mad*) as a wild bullock; God send him such worship as he deserveth; it is an evil precedent for the shire that a strange man should be chosen,

and no worship to my Lord of York, nor to my Lord of Norfolk, to write for him; for if the gentlemen of the shire will suffer such inconvenience, in good faith the shire shall not be called of such worship as it hath been.

Written at Intwood, the Wednesday next after Saint John, in haste.

Your servant,

JOHN JENNEY.

Intwood, Wednesday,
before 1460. 38 II. VI.

LETTER CXLIV.—(LI. vol. i. p. 199.)

[This letter is from Christ. Haussou, in London, dated October 12th, 1460, to J. Paston, detailing minor events which took place after

the battle of Northampton in July of that year. It is entirely political, and contains nothing of novelty.]

LETTER CXLV.—(XCVI. vol. iii. p. 383.)

[We give this letter as a curious specimen of the style and language of a learned man, and an eloquent and popular preacher. See notice of Brackley in Letter cxxx. p. 99.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq., be this letter presented.

Jesu, Maria, &c.

RIGHT reverend Sir, after due commendation; we say in this country that Heydon is for Berkshire in the Commons' House, and the Lady of Suffolk² hath sent up her son and his wife³ to my Lord of York, to ask grace for a sheriff the next year, Stapilton, Boleyn, or Tyrel, *qui absit*. God send you Poynings! W. Paston, W. Rokewood, or Arblaster, ye have much to do; Jesu speed you; ye have many good prayers, what of the convent, city and country. God save our good Lord Warwick, all his brethren, Salisbury, &c., from all false covetise (*covetousness*) and favour of extortion, as they will flee utter shame and confusion. God save them and preserve (*them*) from treason and poison; let them beware thereof, for the pity of God; for if aught come to my Lord Warwick but good, farewell ye, farewell I, and all our friends; for by the way of my soul this land were utterly undone, as God

forbid; their enemies boasting with good to come to their favour; but God defend them, and give them grace to know their friends from their enemies, and to cherish and prefer their friends, and lesse (*lessen*) the might of all their enemies throughout the shires of the land; and [*of those who*] my good Lord Warwick with my lord his brother (*the*) Chancellor, and my lord their father would oppose, as did Daniel, Fortescu, Alexander, Hody, Dr. Aleyn, Heydon, and Thorpe; of the writing made by them at Coventry parliament,⁴ they should answer worse than subcino or subprivo⁵ (*or prino*), and this generally would I say at Paul's Cross, &c., and (*if*) I should come there, &c.

It is verified of them (*Jeremiah*, viii. 8), "vere mendacium operatus est stilus mendax scribarum, &c." And think of two verses of your Psalter, "Scribantur hæc in generatione alterâ (hujus, scilicet, parliamenti) et populus qui creabitur laudabit Deum." (*Psalms*

¹ [In the orig.—"ye may sende to the under-shreffe and see my lord lre."] Fenn translates—"the mayor sent to the under-sheriff and saw my lord's letter."]

² Alice Duchess of Suffolk, widow of William Duke of Suffolk, beheaded at sea in 1450.

³ John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

⁴ This relates to the Bill of Attainder.

⁵ Query? The meaning of this expression.

cii. 18.) "Deleantur etiam tales perversi scriptores de libro viventium et cum justis non scribantur." (*Psalmlxix. 28.*) Et non plura, sed vos, vestros et vestra conservet Jesus gracie in prosperis et graciosius dirigat in agendis. Ex Norwico feria 4^{ta}, nuntio festinante.

And I pray you for God's sake to be good master to John Lyster, &c. And I pray you

think in this parliament of the text of Holy Scripture, "quicumque fecerit contra legem Dei, et contra legem Regis, judicium fiet de eo, vel in condemnationem substantiæ ejus, vel in carcerem, vel in exilium, vel in mortem," 1^{mo} Esdræ vii. v. 26, et p. 2^o Esdræ, 8^o.¹

JOHN BRACKLEY.

Norwich, Thursday,
1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLVI.—(XCVII. vol. iii. p. 387.)

[Is another letter of Brackley's. It contains nothing of interest, and is written in a more

obscure style, and with more Latin, than the preceding.]

NUMBER CXLVII.—(XCVIII. vol. iii. p. 393.)

We have in this sermon of Dr. Brackley a curious specimen of pulpit eloquence and divinity in the reign of Henry VI., commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, &c., under the visible appearance of fiery tongues. We are next informed of the three requisites for a preacher of the Gospel, and of the divine assistance which the Apostles received to enable them to preach with effect. He then sets before his audience the vanity of earthly joys, and the immensity of heavenly ones, both by precept and example. His texts are chosen with propriety, and his examples, as adduced, have their effect. There are in two or three places a few quotations which, from the smallness of the hand, and the badness of the writing, I have been obliged to give up as illegible. As the exact year in which this sermon was preached cannot be ascertained, I have placed it to follow the last letter, written by the author of it.

*An ancient Whitsunday Sermon, preached by Friar Brackley (whose hand it is) at the Friars Minors Church in Norwich.*²

FRIENDS, this holy time, as our mother holy church maketh mention, the Holy Ghost came from Heaven, and lighted on the disciples of Christ, inflaming them with cunning, and strengthening them with grace. And because the doctrine and preaching of them should go throughout all the werld (*world*); first, they were to be informed and taught cunning (*skill* or *knowledge*), and to be strengthened with audacity (*confidence*) and grace, and then to be endued² (*with*) and given all manner of languages, that they might preach to all manner of nations, so that those nations that they preached to might understand them, and every nation his own tongue. And so these Apostles, after that they were inspired with the Holy Ghost, wheresoever they preached, were there never so many nations present, each nation thought that they spoke in their own language, etenim illud loquebantur variis linguis Apostoli.

Friends, three things be necessary in preach-

ing to him that shall preach through the world as the Apostles did, that is to say, cunning, boldness, and languages; if they had had cunning and none audacity, but have feared to have preached, it should little a (*have*) profited, as we have examples daily at Cambridge, exempli gratia, de clerico quis studuit sermonem, &c. And if they have both cunning and audacity, and have none eloquency nor copiousness of language, so that he preach that (*which*) his audience is most exercised in, that they understand him, else it profiteth not.

Therefore these holy Apostles before they should preach, first they were to be confirmed and strengthened. Our Lord strengthened them by under-nemyng,³ informing, and helping, (culpando, *q?*) ut in evangelium recumbentibus, &c.

He strengthened them with his help and grace when he breathed in them, saying, "Accipite spiritum sanctum, et quorum re-

¹ [These references are Brackley's own, but the passage is in Ezra vii. 26.]

² [Fenn gives *endowed*.]

³ This is written on the back of the paper containing the original sermon.

⁴ [Under-naming, *i.e.* appointing.]

miseritis peccata, remittuntur eis, et quorum retinueritis retenta sunt, &c." (*John*, xx. 22, 23); he strengthened them also by his doctrine, when he said, "Petite et accipietis; si quid petieritis patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis." (*John*, xvi. 23, 24.) How that ye should pray to God and ask, I taught you on Easter day; therefore ye shall pray God by good working, right full labouring, and in good deeds persevering.

Friends, ye ought for to ask of God that your joy may be a full joy and perfect; we may never have a full joy in this world, whereas ever among followeth heaviness. A man joyeth sometimes in gold and silver, and in great substance of earthly goods, in beauty of women; but this joy is not perfect, but this joy is not stable, but it is mutable as a shadow; for he that thus joyeth in the beauty of his wife, it may fortune to-morrow he shall follow her to church upon a bier; but if ye will know what is a full and a very joy, truly forgiveness of sin, and everlasting bliss, whereas is never sickness, hunger, nor thirst, nor no manner of disease, but all wealth, joy, and prosperity, &c. There be three manner of joys, the one void, another half full, the third is a full joy; the first is plenty of worldly goods; the second is ghostly grace; the third is everlasting bliss. The first joy, that is, affluence of temporal goods, is called a vain joy, for if a man were set at a board with delicate meats and drinks, and he saw a cauldron boiling afore him with pykke (*pitch*) and brinstone, in the which he should be

thrown naked as soon as he had dined, for [*though*] he should joy much in his deliciose (*delicious*) meats, it should be but a vain joy. Right so doth the joy of a covetous man, if he see what pain his soul shall suffer in hell, for the miskeeping and getting of his goods, he should not joy in his treasure, ut in libro Decalogorum, "Quidam homo dives, &c."

Semiplenum gaudium est quando quis in presenti gaudet et tunc cogitans de futuris dolet; ut in quodam libro Græco, &c., "Quidam Rex Græciæ, &c.," here ye may see but half a joy; who should joy in this world if he remembered him of the pains of the other world? "Non gloriatur fortis in fortitudine suâ, nec sapiens in sapientiâ suâ, nec dives in divitiis suis," (*Jer.* ix. 23); de quibus dicitur, qui confidunt in multitudinē divitiarum suarum, quasi oves in inferno positi sunt (*Psaln* xlix. 6, 14), "Qui gloriantur, in Domino gloriantur" (*Jer.* ix. 24); therefore let us joy in hope of everlasting joy and bliss.

Gaudete quia nomina vestra scripta sunt in cælo, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum. (*Luc.* x. 20.)

A full joy is in heaven.

Et in hoc apparet, quod magnum gaudium est in cælo, quoniam ibi est gaudium quod, "oculos non vidit, nec auris audivit, et in cor hominis non ascendit, quæ Deus preparavit diligentibus," (*I Cor.* ii. 9); et ideo Fratres, variis linguis loquens (*precor*), ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum, vel, habeatis gaudium sempiternum.

LETTER CXLVIII.—(XCIX. vol. iii. p. 399.)

We see here that the Abbot of Langley desires to be excused attending in London as one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf; we learn, moreover, that Sir John himself desired particularly that the whole execution of his will should rest with J. Paston and Thomas Howes. Master John Stokes was a doctor of laws, a civilian, and an officer of the Bishop's Court. Nicholas occurs Abbot of Langley in 1428 and in 1463; he must therefore have been at this time an old man. This abbey was founded by Sir Robert Fitz Roger, Helke, or de Clavering, in 1198, 10 R.1. It was an abbey of considerable possessions, and became the burial-place of a great number of persons of rank and fortune. The seal of the abbey fastens the letter; it is an oval one on red wax, but though imperfect, I have delineated it.



[The Virgin sitting in a tabernacle.]

To the right worshipful Sir, Master John Stokes.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and forasmuch as it is informed me that it was appointed that all the executors of the worshipful knight Sir John Fastolf, whose soul God assoil! should be at London as on Monday next coming, of which executors I am named for one, as I understand; wherefore inasmuch as ye be ordinary and one of the same executors, I pray you tender my labour without my coming, by your discretion, might be more profit to the dead,¹ for I conceive it should be but charge to the dead and little available, considering that John Paston, Esq., and Thomas Howes, parson of Blofield, shall come up at this time, which were the persons above all others that the said Sir John Fastolf put in his most singular love and trust, and would they should have the keeping and disposition of his goods, as well in his life as after his decease, to dispose for the weal of his soul; and that none other

named his executors, but only they twain, should have any keeping or disposing of any part of his goods during their lives; and that all other named executors should support them, and give them to the said John Paston and Thomas Howes their good advice in performing of his desire in that behalf; wherefore that it liketh you in anything ye desire me to do in this cause or matter, to give your faith and credence to the said John Paston and Thomas Howes, and so desired me the said knight faithfully to do, that knoweth God, whom I beseech preserve you from all adversity. Written in the abbey of Langley, the 8th day of the month of May, the year of our Lord 1460.

Your priest,

THE ABBOT OF LANGLEY.

Abbey of Langley,
Thursday, 8th of May,
1460. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXLIX.—(C. vol. iii. p. 401.)

We have here an application from the Prior of Bromholm to the queen for a gift of some timber from off the lands belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, of which there are many in the county of Norfolk. The petitioner seems modest in his request, asking only for eight beams, each to be thirty-three feet long, from which circumstance the size of the dormitory can be nearly ascertained. John Titteshale was prior of Bromholm from 1460 for about twenty years. This letter must have been written therefore either on the 14th of October, 1460, or on the same day in 1465, as Edward IV. married in that year, and J. Paston died in May, 1466. If it was written in the former year, the request must have been to Queen Margaret; if in the latter, to Elizabeth, the queen of Edward IV.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto you, desiring to know of your welfare

and prosperity, which Jesu maintain and increase to his pleasure after your heart's desire,

assistance to the discretion of the other executors.]

¹ [This sentence is obscure, but we think it means—that he is willing to assist ("tender my labour") without going to London, leaving the mode of his

thanking you ever of your good mastership to me showed at all times without desert on my behalf, praying you and heartily beseeching of your good continuance. Please it your mastership forasmuch as it (*is*) moved unto the my good masters the counsel of the Duchy of Lancaster, that they be well willing to make labour unto my sovereign lady the queen of your good instance for certain timber toward my dortour (*dormitory*) at Bromholm, in which mine especial desire is to have eight principal beams, every one in length eleven yards. I am not expert in making of any supplication, beseeching your

mastership to take it upon you to do it make after your advice, alleged all poverty as your worshipful discretion can much better than I can inform, and I remit all to your wisdom, ever beseeching you to call this matter to your remembrance. No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity mote (*please*)¹ have you in his governance, and send you long life to endure to his pleasure. Written the 14th day of October.

Your priest and chaplain,

JOHN, Prior of Bromholm.

14th of October, 1460, 39 H. VI.,
or 1465, 5 E. IV.

LETTER CL.—(LII. vol. i. p. 203.)

Clement Paston appears to have written this letter to his brother, to induce him to show himself zealous for the York party, who had now possession of London and the king; and to induce him to do it with the greater readiness, informs him that the Lancastrian army, led on by the queen, had leave to pillage the south, and take away any man's property: this is a true, though terrible, picture of a kingdom harassed by civil commotions!

To his right worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT reverend² and worshipful brother, I recommend (*me*) to you, certifying you your letter was delivered me the 23d day of January about the noon season, and Richard Calle rode in the morning, and therefore I broke your letter, if (*lest*) there were any after matter; and I did (*ordered*) Christopher Hauswan (*to*) go to my Lord of Canterbury³ to tell him as your letter rehearsed; and my lord said he had spoken with your man thereof the day before, and if the Bishop of Norwich⁴ would not do so much for him, he is the less beholden to him; notwithstanding, he said he would save you harmless against John Young; but, and ye do well, remember this lord have many matters to think on, and if it be forgotten the harm is yours; also if the word [*q. world?*] turn John Young will not do at his prayer.

And my Lord Fitzwalter⁵ is ridden northwards, and it is said, in my Lord of Canter-

bury's house, that he hath taken 200 of Andrew Trollop's⁶ men. And as for Colt, and Sir James Strangwyse, and Sir Thomas Pykering, they be taken or else dead: the common voice is that they be dead.

Hopton and Hastings be with the Earl of March, and were not at the field.

What word that ever he have from my lords that be here, it is well done and best for you to see that the country be always ready to come, both footmen and horsemen, when they be sent for; for I have heard said the farther lords will be here sooner than men ween, I have heard said ere three weeks to an end; and also that ye should come with more men and cleanlier arrayed than any other man of your country should; for it lieth more upon your worship and toucheth you more near than other men of that country, and also ye be more had in favour with my lordshere. In this country every man is well

¹ Not *please*, but *might*. The sentence means, "but may the Holy Trinity." &c.

² [Reverend is here not used in its now usual acceptation, but in that of revered, honoured—as we have already noticed, and in which sense it frequently occurs.]

³ Thomas Bourchier.

⁴ Walter Hart, [or Lyhart] Bishop of Norwich.

⁵ This must have been some action, after the battle of Wakefield, in which the queen's party was beaten.

⁶ Andrew Trollop was killed at the battle of Towton, on the 29th March, 1461, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

willing to go with my lords here, and I hope God shall help them, for the people in the north rob and steal, and be appointed¹ to pill (*pillage*) all this country, and give away men's goods and livelyhoods in all the south country, and that will ask a mischief. My lords that be here have as much as they may do to keep down all this country, more than four or five shires, for they would be up on the men in the north, for it is for the weal of all the south. I pray you recommend me to my mother, and that I prayed her of her blessing; I pray you excuse me to her that I write her no letter, for this was enough to do. I dare not pray you to re-

commend me to my sister your wife, and the messenger I trow be so wise he can not do it. Ye must pay him for his labour, for he tarried all night in this town for this letter.

Written the 23d day of January in haste, when I was not well at ease. God have (*you*) in his keeping.

By CLEMENT PASTON,
Your Brother.

23d January, 1460. 29 H. VI.



[The seals of the Pastons were usually one or more fleur de lis, but on this letter Clement Paston gives an esclop shell.]

LETTER CLI.—(Cl. vol. iii. p. 405.)

In these days few persons died without bequeathing something to the church, to be distributed at the pleasure of their executors. This trust seems to have been reposed in J. Paston by several, though it appears he was slow in disposing of the money, as his father had been dead now above fifteen years, and a part of his goods so bequeathed remained still in his hands; as appears by this letter.

Amicabili magistro nostro, Johanni Paston, Armigero.

FULL reverend and worshipful, after all due reverence and commendation, your poor priest beseecheth humbly it please your good mastership to understand by this simple bill, that on the Friday next after the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul last past, I was at your place at Caister to have told you what answer I had of Sir Thomas Howes, parson of Blofield, and inasmuch as ye were not at home, I told it to my mistress your wife, and God thank her of her gentleness, she made me great cheer; and moreover advised me to send you a bill thereof to London. This was his answer, when I had talked to him as I could, in like wise as ye adverted² me to do; he answered again in these words, "Near is my kirtle, but nearer is my smock;" and this was his meaning, that ye should be more near us, and tender to us, than he, and that ye should rather owe us good will than he, and that we should labour rather to your mastership than to him; and also that good that he had to dispose he had beset it, and of parcell, he told me, he had delivered the Abbot of Langley, fourscore pounds,

whereof, as he said to me, ye grudged and were in manner displeased, notwithstanding ye said again to him ye should give as much; and he said to me ye named the places where; and therefore he advised me to labour effectually to your good mastership, for ye might help us well; for he said ye had much good of the dead to dispose, what of your father, God bless that soul! what of Berney, and what now of his good master Fastolf. And as for Sir John Fastolf, on whose soul Jesu have mercy! he said to me, ye had of his good four, four, and four more than he, in these same terms, without any sum.

And after all other talkings he told me he should be with you at London hastily, and that he would say good word to you to relieve our poor place; Sir, I beseech, be thee not displeased, for truly and (*if*) I wist to have your heavy mastership therefore, I had lever (*rather*) it had been unthought. And [*it*] is this, that when Sir Thomas Howes and ye be soon at London we might be so in your good grace that our place might be brother

¹ The queen had informed her northern army that they should plunder the country south of Trent.

² The original, is "au'ted." We think for advertised, or advertized.]

to Langley, for that should glad us more than the commission that the Bishop of Norwich¹ sent us on Thursday last past to gather the dymes (*tenth*s), for that is a shrewd labour for us, a great cost and a shrewd jeopardy.

Evermore that high and mighty celestial prince preserve you body and soul, and send you comfort of the Holy Ghost well to perform all your heart's desire in all your

matters to his pleasure and your worship, and solace to all your well-willers. Written at Bromholm on the Saturday next after the feast of the conversion of Saint Paul last past.

From your priest and headsmen,
JOHN, prior of Bromholm.²

Bromholm,
Saturday, 31 January,
1469. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CLII.—(CII. vol. iii. p. 409.)

In former times a person's signet or seal was of the utmost consequence, and we find by this letter that J. Paston had made immediate inquiries after his as soon as he missed it. I cannot in this place forbear mentioning the promiscuous and unauthorised use of arms, which, to the disgrace of the laws of honour, now so generally prevails, since it has been supposed that the college of arms is not empowered to compel payment by attaching the body of goods of the offender for any fine set by the Court of Honour upon those persons who have assumed arms, and bear them without a proper grant or descent from the original grantee. When county visitations were permitted, and the king of arms of the province and heralds went their progresses, distinctions of family descents and family arms were recorded and kept up, and the heirs of gentlemen's families for a small fee were enabled to join themselves to their parent stock, by attending with their vouchers at the time and place appointed, of which they were informed by a public summons from the sheriffs of their respective counties. It may be said, that in a free government like ours every man ought to have a right to ornament his carriage, his plate, or the wax on his letters, with any device most agreeable to himself without being accountable to any one. This being allowed, what will follow? That every one may assume a name, or even a title, or may decorate himself with the insignia of any of the honourable orders. But would not such an one be called a fool or a madman? He certainly would. I have often thought that government might fairly avail itself of the present prevailing taste for arms-bearing, by compelling every person of what rank or degree soever to take out an annual licence or certificate, for which a stated sum according to his rank or degree should be paid for the liberty of bearing or displaying any arms, crest, or device, on his banners, carriages, plate, seals, &c. &c. This would be a tax which could not effect the poor, nor in reality any one who did not wish to put himself in the rank of a gentleman. [This suggestion of Fenn's is curious as being probably the origin of a tax not long afterwards imposed, and now in existence.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that I have received your letter this day that ye sent me by Yelverton's man. As for your signet, I found it upon your board the same day that ye went hence, and I send it you by Richard Heberd, bringer hereof; as for your errands that ye wrote to me for, Richard Charles is out about your errands about Gresham, and for his own matters also, and I suppose he cometh not home till it be Tuesday or Wednesday next coming, and as soon as he cometh home he shall go about your errands that ye wrote to me for.

I sent you a letter written on Tuesday last past, which, as I suppose, Roger Ormsby delivered you. I took it to Alson Partridge; she rode with Clippesby's wife to London.

I pray you if ye have another son that ye will let it be named Harry,³ in remembrance of your brother Harry; also I pray you that ye would send me dates and cinnamon as hastily as ye may. I have spoken with John Dammie of that ye bade me say to him to say to Thomas Note, and he says he was well paid that ye said and thought therein, as ye did: nerles (*nevertheless*) I bade him that he should say to the said Thomas therein,

¹ Walter Hart [or Lyhart] became Bishop of Norwich in 1446, and died in 1472.

² This priory was founded by William de Glanville, in the reign of Henry I., and in the year 1113.

³ On the back of the original letter in an ancient hand is written "It appere by this Iré yt Justice Paston had a sonne named Henry, who dyed youge."

as it were of himself, without your advice or any others; and he said he should so, and that it should be purveyed for this next week at the furthest. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich in

haste the Friday next before Candlemas day.
By your groaning wife,¹

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 1st February,
1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CLIII.—(CIII. vol. iii. p. 413.)

This letter has no direction, and lest it should be opened, the paper which fastens the seal is, along the edge, marked with lines by a pen which communicate with the latter, by which means the receiver might easily have discovered any attempts to have opened it, as the lines would not then have exactly coincided again. On the back of it, but in a later hand, is written "A lre to J. Paston, ar. from his wife." I should think that this letter was written just before the important crisis that finished Henry's reign and placed Edward on the throne; if so, it was written on the 1st of March, 1460-1, at a time when the friends of Henry might be elated at the approach of the queen with her army, which had been lately victorious at St. Alban's, not foreseeing that in a few days the Duke of York would become their sovereign. Giles Saint Loe was high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1458. N.B. To this letter the initial letter of her Christian name is only affixed. Seal, a fleur de lys. See engraving at end of the letter, wherein the marks drawn by a pen to show if it had been opened, are expressed. The square lines represent the paper folded over the letter on which the seal is impressed; the angular ones show the connecting lines from that paper to the paper on which the letter is written.

A letter to John Paston, Esq., from his wife.

PLEASE it you to weet that it is let me weet by one that oweth you good will, that there is laid a wait upon you in this country if ye come here at large, to bring you to the presence of such a lord in the north as shall not be for your ease, but to jeopardy of your life, or great and importable loss of your goods; and he that hath taken upon him this enterprise now, was under-sheriff to Giles Saintlowe; he hath great favour hereto by the means of the son of William Baxter that lieth buried in the Grey Friars; and as it is reported the said son hath given great silver to the lords in the north to bring the matter about, and now he and all his old fellowship put out their fins, and are right flygge (ripe) and merry, hoping all thing is and shall be as they will have it; also it is told me that the father of the bastard in this country said that now should this shire be made sure for him and his heirs, and for the Baxter's heirs also, whereby I conceive they think that they have none enemy but you, &c.

Wherefore like it you to be the more wary of your guiding for your person's safe-guard, and also that ye be not too hasty to come

into this country till ye hear the world (is) more sure. I trow the bearer of this shall tell more by mouth as he shall be informed of the rule in this country. God have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the second Sunday of Lent, by candlelight at even.

By yours, &c.

MARGARET PASTON.

1st March, 1460-1.
39 H. VI.



¹ The conclusion of this letter is particular, and shows that the writer was very near her time of lying-in; it was written I believe about 1460.

LETTER CLIV.—(LIII. vol. i. p. 209.)

This letter must have been written in the reign of Henry VI., but in what year I cannot say: it contains a curious historical anecdote, greatly to the honour of the commander of the ships. [It is certainly very curious, if true; but we believe it must be greatly exaggerated. So remarkable an event could not have passed unnoticed by historians, none of whom even allude to it, though they mention the far less important capture of a few Spanish or Hans-town vessels by the Earl of Warwick about the same time, *i. e.* the latter end of the reign of Henry VI.]

To my reverend master, Thomas Daniel, Esquire¹ for the king's body,² be this letter delivered in haste.

MOST reverend master, I recommend me unto your gracious mastership, ever desiring to hear of your worshipful estate; the which Almighty God maintain it, and increase it unto his pleasure.

Pleasing you to know of my welfare, and of all your men, at the making of this letter, we were in good health of body, aye³ blessed be God.

Moreover, master, I send you word by Rawly Pickering of all matters, the which I beseech you give him credence, as he will inform you of all, so sure I beseech you in the reverence of God that ye will inform our sovereign lord the king of all matters that I send you in this letter; like as I have sent a letter to my Lord Chancellor, and to all my lords, by the said Pickering: the which letter I beseech you that ye take and deliver to my lord, and all my lords, by your own hands, and let the said Pickering declare all things as he hath seen and known.

First, I send you word that when we went to sea, we took two ships of Brest coming out of Flanders; and then after, there is made a great arming in Britayne to meet with me and my fellowship, that is to say, the great ship of Brest, the great ship of Morlaix, the great ship of Vannes, with other eight ships, barges, and balingers to the number of 3000 men, and so we lay on the sea to meet with them.

And then we met with a flote (*fleet*) of an hundred great ships of Prusse [*Prussia*], Lubeck, Campe, Rostock, Holland, Zealand, and Flanders,⁴ betwixt Guernsey and Portland; and there I came aboard the admiral, and bade them strike in the king's name of England, and they bade me skite in the king's name of England; and then I and

my fellowship said but (*unless*) he will strike down the sail, that I will oversail them by the grace of God, and God will send me wind and weather; and they bade me do my worst, because I had so few ships, and so small that they scorned me.

And as God would, on Friday last was, we had a good wind; and then we armed us to the number of 2000 men in my fellowship, and made us ready for to oversail them; and then they launched a boat, and set up a standard of truce, and came and spoke with me, and there they were yielded all the hundred ships to go with me into what port that me list and my fellows; but they fought with me the day before, and shot at us a 1000 guns, and quarrels out of number, and have slain many of my fellowship, and maimed also.

Wherefore methinketh that they have forfeited both ships and goods at our sovereign lord the king's will.

Beseeching you that ye do your part in this matter, for this I have written to my Lord Chancellor, and all my lords of the king's council; and so I have brought them, all the hundred ships, within Wight (*the Isle of Wight*), in spite of them all.

And ye might get leave of our sovereign lord the king to come hither, it shall turn you to great worship and profit, to help make our appointment in the king's name, for ye saw never such a sight of ships taken into England this hundred winters; for we lie armed night and day to keep them in, to the time that we have tidings of our sovereign and his council; for truly they have done harm to me, and to my fellowship, and to your ships, more than 2000*l.*⁵ worth (*of*) harm.

¹ Thomas Daniel, Esq. [See Letter cxxxix.]

² An esquire of the king's body was an officer of great trust, lodged near, and during the night all messages, &c. were delivered by him in person to the king.

³ [*Aye* was frequently written *I*, as it is here in the original. Fenn omits it in the translation.]

⁴ These were great maris for trade.

⁵ I cannot tell whether this, in the original letter, is 2000*l.* or 3000*l.*

And therefore I am advised, and all my fellowship, to drown¹ them and slay them, without that we have tidings from our sovereign the king and his council; and therefore in the reverence of God come ye yourself, and ye shall have a great avail and worship for your coming to see a such sight, for I dare well say, that I have here at this time all the chief ships of Dutchland, Holland, Zealand,

and Flanders, and now it were time for to treat for a final peace as for these parts.

I write no more to you at this time, but Almighty Jesu have you in his keeping.

I write in haste within Wight, on Sunday at night after the Ascension of our Lord.

By your own servant,
ROBERT WENYNGTON.

Isle of Wight, Sunday, H. VI.

LETTER CLV.—(CIV. vol. iii. p. 415.)

On the back of this letter, but in a later hand, is the following memorandum, "Robtus Debenham ar' hūit exit. Gilbt'm Debenham mil. fil. suū, ipso pat. viven." We have here a curious and at that time a common instance of forcible entry, and keeping possession by force, from which, and many other similar accounts contained in these letters, we see the propriety of buildings of that age being strengthened by towers, moats, and draw-bridges, as defences against those forcible invasions of private property. William Naunton, the writer of this letter, was of the very ancient and worshipful family of Naunton, at this time situated at Alderton in Suffolk. His descendants afterwards removed to Letheringham in the same county, where they possessed a considerable property, and resided in a venerable mansion, formerly the abbey. The last male possessor of this estate left it by will to his heir at law: the consequence of which has been that pretended heirs have been continually starting up, and disputing the right of the person in possession to the detriment of the estate, and to the utter destruction of the church and chancel, now become a ruinous mass from neglect, and in which were many curious, expensive, and valuable monuments of this, the Wingfields and other allied families; the windows were also adorned with exceedingly elegant paintings on the glass, of Scripture history, effigies, and armorial bearings, all of which have been within these very few years entirely demolished! The monuments, however, are most of them preserved by the accurate pencil of Mr. Johnson, of Woodbridge, at the expense of my friend Craven Ord, Esq. This writer little thought, whilst he was lamenting the proceedings at Cotton-hall to J. Paston, that in after-ages his descendants would be despoiling a litigated property in somewhat a similar manner. [This note of Penn's was published in 1789.]

To my Master Paston, the elder, be this letter delivered in hast.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership the cause why I write; I let you have knowledge of the men that be in Cotton-hall (*in Suffolk*), how they be strangely disposed against you, for, as I hear say, they make revel there, they melt lead, and break down your bridge, and make that no man go into (*the*) place but on a ladder, and make them as strong as they can against you by the supportation of Jenney, and Debenham, and his son, for they say there that Jenney hath sold the livelihood unto Debenham, and that his son the knight shall dwell there, and therefore they have warned a court against Monday, and now they have advised to keep it on Saturday before Monday; what they mean thereby I wot never; but as for the fellowship in the place that is there now, and have been there

all this week, there is no man of substance as we hear, and there have been but seven or eight all this week, but there will be a great fellowship this night or to-morrow upon Saturday, for then they will keep the court; and as for Edward Dale he dare not abide well at home, they threaten him so, because he will send them no vyталы (*victuals*), and as for myself Edward Dale dare not let me well be there for taking in suspicion. And as for the tenants, they be well disposed, except one or two, so that ye will support them in haste, for they may not keep their cattle off the ground longer, and specially they desire to have your own presence, and they would be of great comfort.

No more I write to you, but the Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written on the Friday after my departing.

By your servant,
WILLIAM NAUNTON.

Friday, ... 14 . . .
Date uncertain.

¹ It seems contrary to all rules of war or humanity to drown or slay prisoners of war, after they have surrendered.

LETTER. CLVI.—(CV. vol. iii. p. 419.)

We have here a most curious letter from a brother of the Order of the Temple of Syon to J. Paston, earnestly persuading him to a temporary residence amongst them, according to the rules of the order, and dissuading him from improper alms-giving to the hurt of his private affairs. The choosing of a place to do his penance in during Advent, reminds us of the establishment for the secret house of the Earl of Northumberland, in the reign of Henry the VIIIth, who at certain seasons of the year retired from his principal mansion to some small retreat, where he lived privately, and most probably performed offices of devotion and charity, as atonements for his sins of omission and commission. See the 'Northumberland Book,' p. 361, and notes at p. 442. We may from this letter suppose that persons of inferior rank at certain times likewise left their houses, and retired for the same purposes of praying and alms-doing, and that the season of Advent was the time set apart by J. Paston for those religious duties. [From all other parts of the correspondence, however, notwithstanding the writers "p'fite knowlich of yor freell and nat'all disposiseon," J. Paston would seem to have been among the last of men who ruin themselves through their liberality. The threat of a sharp and hasty process in case of disobedience, seems to confirm the subsequent passage, where he is invited to come and be jocund, "as ze sholde be yn the place of yor p'fession amounggis yor holy bryy'yn," that Paston was himself professed of the order, which we think however is hardly probable.]

To my right worshipful master and brother, John Paston, this letter be taken.

RIGHT worshipful and reverent master and brother, with all my service I recommeund me unto you. Please it unto your great wisdom to have in your discreet remembrance the strait order on which we be professed, and on which ye are bounden to keep your residence, and specially on this time of Christmas amongst your confieres of this holy order, the Temple of Syon; for unless that ye keep duly the points of your holy religion, our Master Thomas Babyngton, master and sovereign of our order, by the assent of his brethren, be advised to award against you right sharp and hasty process to do call you to do your observance, and to obey the points of your religion, which were unto me great heaviness. Wherefore I, as he that hath most greatest cause, and is most bounden unto your great gentleness, and also whom nature and kin most specially before every of all our brethren binden me to owe and will you good will and true heart, considering the great time of penance that ye have been in from soon upon Michaelmas litherto, that is to say in relieving and sustenance of your even Cristen,¹ and also in the charitable and meritory (*meritorious*) deed of alms-doing, that is to say, in plenteous and liberal gifts, which is more preciouser than gold or silver, which hath not been at all times to your great ease, neither heart's pleasure (*pleasure*), but rather to your great disease and intolerable pain, and

where² God's law and man's law accord that it shall not be lawful to none earthly man to be so liberal and plenteous of that that God sendeth him, that he should so dispose it so that he should nought have to live by; and forasmuch as I have perfect knowledge of your freell (*free will*) and natural disposition so set unto them that be needy and hungry, that of yourself ye have no might, neither power, to abstain and rule yourself, but all so long as God sendeth and giveth you whereof to dispose and help your even Cristen, ye must needs dispose it forth amongst your even Cristen, I counsel you that in all so hasty and goodly time as ye can, to come unto your holy brethren that be of this devout and close conversation,³ to the intent that ye might be advertised and learned by them the good rule and measure that ye ought and should have in the disposition and dealing of your alms.

And also sithen (*since*) ye have chosen you a place in this season of Advent, in which ye have had a reasonable leisure and space to do your penance in, which draweth fast to an end, which hath been a convenient place as for the season of the year, and now it draweth fast unto Christmas, on which time every true Christian man should be merry, jocund, and glad; and sithen there is no place which by likelihood of reason ye should find in your heart to be so glad and jocund in, as ye should

¹ Even Cristen. I wish for an explanation of this. [*Even is equal or fellow. Fellow Christians.*]

² [Whereas.]

³ [Original, "cōversaion," Fenn translates "counsel."]

be in the place of your profession amongst your holy brethren, in which place in this season of the year it is accustomed to be (*have*) all manner of disport,¹ like as it is not unknown to your wise discretion; wherefore as my simple reason leadeth me, your great discretion should rule you, that ye should approach nigh the place of your holy religion in all so hasty time as ye could or might, of whose coming all your said brethren would be glad and fain (*pleased*), and in especial I your servant and brother, like as I am most singular bounden to the increase of your prosperity and welfare, which I shall ever desire with God's mercy, which have you under his blessed and favourable protection. Written

in the Temple of Syon, the 3d day of December, in great haste.

By your servant and brother, T.²

Temple of Syon, 3rd December,
Date uncertain.

LETTER CLVII.—(CVI. vol. iii. p. 425.)

We have in this letter an instance of force used in entering into possession of manors and estates; a very common method of proceeding in those violent and unsettled times.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that it was told me this week that there is a fair place to sell in St. Laurence's parish, and standeth near the church, and by the water-side, the which place Topps hath to sell, Pyte Alyster bought it of Topps, and now for default of payment Topps hath entered again therein, and shall sell it in haste as it is told me; the said Lyster dwelleth therein at this time, but he shall out, for he is held right a poor man;³ I suppose if ye like to buy it, when ye come home ye shall mow (*be able to*) have it of Topps as good cheap or better than another should.

As for tidings we have none good in this country; I pray God send us good: it was told me that Richard Southwell hath entered in the manor of (*Holm*) Hale, the which is the Lady Boys's,⁴ and keepeth it with strength

with such another fellowship as hath been at Braynton, and wasteth and despoileth all that there is; and the Lady Boys, as it is told me, is to London to complain to the king and to the lords thereof; it seemeth it was not for nought that he held with Charles and his fellowship.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to speak to James Gloys to buy the *unguentum album* that I spake to him for; and that ye will remember your fair daughter's girdle.

I hope ye shall be at home so soon that I will write no more tidings to you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all that ye will speed well in. Written at Norwich on the Ascension day.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, May,
H. VI. Date uncertain.

¹ The jovial manner of living at Christmas in these societies is here likewise pointed out, and makes us wish we could have taken a look at their pastimes, feasts, &c.

² The writer of this singular letter was from his own account a relation of J. Paston, and his signature is like what in heraldry often represents a fountain; it is therefore possible that his name might be Thomas Fountaine, as a family of that name resided at Salle

in the county of Norfolk, about the time that this letter was written.

³ [We do not think Margaret Paston intends to express anything so atrocious here as that Pyte "shall out" unjustly because he is a poor man, but only that being "rygh apore man," he will not be able to pay, and must relinquish his bargain.]

⁴ Sibilla, daughter and heir of Sir Robt. Ulley, and widow of Sir Roger Boys, knt.: shew as alive after 1450.

LETTER CLVIII.—(CVII. vol. iii. p. 427.)

We have here an account of a low amour; but the reason why I have given this letter is to show that E. Paston's mother was governed by some one in the house, who took upon him to direct as he pleased, and for that reason a party seemed to be forming against him by her children. The person here meant was, I believe, Gloys, a priest, who resided in the house, and was a favourite with Agnes Paston. As a mistress of a family, she was certainly doing her duty in discouraging improper behaviour in her servants; but then, as now, we find it would be sometimes prudent to overlook improprieties in a domestic, who was in other respects a valuable one. [Particularly when, as here, the facts are not very indubitably proved, and are denied.]

To John Paston, Esq.

SIR, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that my mother hath caused me to put Gregory out of my service, as God help I write to you the very cause why; it happened him to have a knave's lust, in plain terms, to lie with a quean, and so did in the Coning Close; it fortune'd him to be espied by two ploughmen of my mother's, which were as fain (*desirous*) as he of that matter, and desired him to have part, and as company required said not nay, insomuch that the ploughmen had her all night in their stable, and Gregory was clear delivered of her, and as he swears had not ado with her within my mother's place; notwithstanding my mother thinks that he was (*the*) ground of that matter, wherefore there is no remedy but he must avoid; and insomuch that at the last time that ye were here (*ye*) desired him of me if that he should depart from me, I send you the very cause of his departing, as my mother saith, but I am in certain the contrary is true; it is no more but that he cannot please all parties; but that gentleman is his word's lord, he hath said that he would lift them whom that him please, and as it showed well he lifted one fourteen miles in a morning, and now he hath been causer of his lift,

I wot not how far but if (*unless*) that ye be his better master; but and we among us give not him a lift, I pray God that we never thrive; and that is his intent, I trow, to bring us to; wherefore I require you, if that it please you to have him, that ye will be the better master to him for my sake, for I am he that is as sorry to depart from him as any man alive from his servant, and by my truth, as farforth as I know, he is as true as any alive.

I trust my fortune shall be better than ever to live thus here; but if I were hencowards I assure you I would not change for none that I know; he is profitable on divers things as ye know well.

There has been a great break (*breach*) betwixt Calle and me, as I shall inform you at my coming, which shall be on Wednesday next by the grace of God, who preserve you.

Written at Mauteby on Whitsun eve.

EDMOND PASTON.



Mauteby,
Whitsun Eve.

LETTER CLIX.—(CVIII. vol. iii. p. 431.)

I have given this letter, as it ascertainment the public manner by which the ships were victualled, and shows us that it was done by a kind of voluntary subscription, in every town throughout the hundreds, of money and corn, though what proportion the corn bore to the money collected does not appear from this account.

To my master, John Paston.

PLEASETH your mastership to weet, that I was at Scole, and spake with Arblaster and John Sadler, and with other good yeomen of the country, to understand how they were guided for the victualling of the barge of Yarmouth; and I understand by them that

their hundred have paid, nevertheless it is but little, there was gathered in that hundred eighteen shillings and certain corn; and (*in*) some other hundred six marks (*4l.*) and corn; and so they have paid in, all the hundreds and towns here about, that is to say, East

Flegg and West Flegg, and up to Blofield, Tunstead, and up to Stalman. I understand by the commission that Debenham hath, it is more large than Master John's, as ye shall understand, whereof I send you a copy, which causeth me that I labour no farther therein, notwithstanding your mastership shall have

knowledge what every hundred gives, and Yarmouth both.

Written at Winterton, the morrow after I departed from your mastership.

Your poor beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.¹

Winterton.

LETTER CLX.—(CIX. vol. iii. p. 433.)

It appears by this copy of a letter (for so it is styled at the top of the paper) that the candidates were not always present on the day of election. The under-sheriff here meant to do his duty, and to make his return after the sufficient, that is, according to the greatest number of votes, though he at the same time hints, that it is not entirely as he shall please, but as the high-sheriff shall direct. [The high-sheriff, as the legal returning officer, would of course decide who had the majority of votes, or, as is likely here, show of hands, according to his own opinion, and not on that of his deputy.]

The copy of a letter sent to John Paston, by the under-sheriff of Norfolk.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, &c. And, Sir, as for the election of the knights of the shire here in Norfolk, in good faith here hath been much to do, nevertheless to let you have knowledge of the demeaning, my Master Berney, my Master Grey, and ye had greatest voice, and I purpose me, as I will answer God, to return the due election,

that is after the sufficient you and Master Grey, nevertheless I have a master. Written at Hetherset, the Thursday next before Midsummer.

By

WILLIAM PRYCE.

Hetherset,

Thursday, June.

LETTER CLXI.—(CX. vol. iii. p. 433.)

It appears from what is said in this letter, that Perse was committed as one who had been a partisan in the civil wars of the times, though of which party it does not appear; nor is it material, as my reason for giving the letter is to show the treatment of prisoners.

To my right worshipful Sir Robert Rokesby.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your good mastership that ye will vouchsafe to speak to Richard Kowwen, that he might bring me or send me the money that is between him and me in all the haste that he may, for in good faith I had never more need for to have help of my good as I have at this time, for God wot it stands right strange with me, for the false gaoler that keepeth me entreateth me worse than it were a dog, for I am fettered worse than ever I was, and manacled on the hands both day and night, for he is afraid of me for breaking away; he maketh false tales of me, through the means of a false quean that was tending to a Frenchman that is prisoner to my Lord Roos, and for because of that he bronde (*up-*

braileth) me every day by John of Berney that is gone to the other lords, but I trust to God once to quit him his meed; and, Sir, I thank you mickle (*much*) of that ye have done for me or said, and Sir, I shall deserve it against you, by the grace of God, for in faith I am beholden to you more than to all men that ever I found since I came in prison.

No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

By your servant and beadsman,

PERSE.

This letter has neither place nor date mentioned.

¹ Richard Calle of Edinthorpe, he afterwards married Margery, daughter of John and Margaret Paston.



[Edward IV.]

From a painting on a board formerly preserved in the Manor House, Southwick, Northamptonshire.

EDWARD IV.—1460 to 1483.

LETTER CLXII.—(I. vol. i. p. 217.)

This letter gives a very curious and authentic account of the bloody battle of Towton (a village about 10 miles S. W. from York), fought on Palm Sunday, the 29th of March, 1461; within a month after Edward's possessing himself of the crown, and upon the fate of which his future hopes of retaining it depended. The facts here related are those sent by the king himself to his mother Cecily Duchess of York, widow of Richard Duke of York, daughter to Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland.

To my master, John Paston, in haste.

PLEASE you to know and weet of such tidings as my Lady of York hath by a letter of credence under the sign-manual of our sovereign lord King Edward; which letter came unto our said lady this same day Eastern even¹ at xj o'clock, and was seen and read by me, William Paston.

First, our sovereign lord hath won the field; and upon the Monday next after Palm Sunday² he was received into York with great solemnity and processions. And the mayor and commons of the said city made their means to have grace by Lord Montagu³ and Lord Berners,⁴ which, before the king's coming into the said city, desired him of grace for the said city, which granted them grace.

On the king's part is slain Lord Fitzwalter,⁵ and Lord Scroop⁶ sore hurt; John Stafford⁷ [and] Horne of Kent be dead, and

Humphrey Stafford⁷ (and) William Hastings⁸ made knights, with others; Blount is knighted, &c.

On the contrary part, is dead Lord Clifford,⁹ Lord Nevile,¹⁰ Lord Welles,¹¹ Lord Willoughby,¹² Anthony Lord Scales,¹³ Lord Harry,¹⁴ and by supposition the Earl of Northumberland,¹⁵ Andrew Trollop, with many others, gentle and commons, to the number of twenty thousand.

Item, King Harry, the queen, the prince, Duke of Somerset,¹⁶ Duke of Exeter,¹⁷ Lord

⁷ John Stafford and Humphrey Stafford were both of the family of the Duke of Buckingham.

⁸ William Hastings was soon after created Lord Hastings, and in 1483 beheaded by the command of Richard III.

⁹ John Lord Clifford, killed at Ferry Bridge, the day before the battle of Towton, was the man who basely stabbed Edmund Earl of Rutland, immediately after the battle of Wakefield, in December 1460.

¹⁰ John Lord Nevile.

¹¹ Lionel Lord Welles.

¹² Richard Welles, a son of Lord Welles, in 1453 was summoned as Lord Willoughby in right of his wife, Joanna, heir of that great warrior Robert Lord Willoughby.

¹³ Anthony Widville, Lord Scales, was not killed in this battle, but became afterwards Earl Rivers, and died in 1491. This nobleman and Lord Montagu must have been created lords immediately on the accession of Edward IV.

¹⁴ Lord Harry:—query, Stafford?

¹⁵ Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, jointly commanded with the Duke of Somerset, and was then slain, being about the age of 36 years.

¹⁶ Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, was taken prisoner at the battle of Hexham in 1464, and beheaded by order of Edward IV.

¹⁷ Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, took sanctuary at Westminster, after the battle of Barnet, in 1471; went hence privately abroad, where he lived in great poverty.

¹ Eastern eve was this year on the 4th of April.

² Palm Sunday fell on the 29th of March. This account therefore from the king did not arrive in London till six days after the battle.

³ John Nevile, Lord Montagu, was, in 1464, created Earl of Northumberland, and, on his resignation of that title, in 1470, Marquis of Montagu; he fell in the battle of Barnet in 1471, fighting against King Edward.

⁴ Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners, in the battle of St. Alban's, in 1450, fought on the part of Henry VI.; but after that time he and his family espoused the cause of the Yorkists; he died in 1474.

⁵ It does not appear from our baronages that there was at this time a Lord Fitzwalter; our historians however mention such a nobleman, as commanding at Ferry Bridge for Edward IV., where he was defeated and killed a few days before this battle; and this letter confirms the existence of such a title.

⁶ John Lord Scroop, of Bolton, died in 1494.

Roos¹ be fled into Scotland, and they be chased and followed, &c. We send no er [*earlier*]² unto you because we had none certain till now; for unto this day London was as sorry city as might; and because Spordams had no certain tidings, we thought ye should take them a worth [*at their worth*]³ till more certain.

Item, Thorp Waterfield is yielded as Spordams can tell you.

And Jesu speed you; we pray you that this tidings my mother may know.

By your brother,

W. PASTON.

TH. PLAYTERS.

London,

Saturday, Easter Eve,

4th April, 1461. 1.E. IV.

On a piece of paper pinned to the above letter, is a list of the names of the noblemen and knights, and the number of soldiers

slain at the above battle of Towton, as follow:—

Noblemen.

Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire.⁴

William Beaumont, Viscount Beaumont.

John Clifford, Lord Clifford.

John Nevile, Lord Nevile.

Lord Dacre.⁵

Lord Henry Stafford, of Buckingham.

Lionel Welles, Lord Welles.

Anthony Rivers, Lord Scales.

Richard Welles, Lord Willoughby.

Sir Ralph Bigot, knight, Lord de Malley.

Knights.

Sir Ralph Grey.

Sir Richard Jeney.

Sir Harry Belingham.

Sir Andrew Trollop, with twenty-eight thousand,⁶ numbered by the heralds.

LETTER CLXIII.—(II. vol. i. p. 223.)

From hence we learn some further particulars relative to the battle of Towton, and of the proceedings after it; particularly of the besieging of a place where Henry VI. was, and from which he might have been easily stolen away. This account differs from that given by our historians, who say that the king, &c. fled directly into Scotland. [There seems no authority for the fact. It is indeed reported as hearsay only; nor is there any place in Yorkshire with a name like "Coroumbre," or at least none such able to stand a siege.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq.

PLEASE your mastership to weet, that I have spoken with Essex in the matter that ye weet of, and find him by his talking well disposed; notwithstanding he will not fall to no conclusion to engross up the matter till the chief baron be come to London, and that he be made privy to the matter; which we look after this same second Saturday after Easter.

And as for Nottingham he is not yet coming to London.

Item, as for tidings, it is noised and told for truth of men of worship and others, that

the Earl of Wiltshire is taken, Doctor Morton and Doctor Makerell, and be brought to the king at York. Mastr William⁷ also spoke with a man that saw them. Item, Sir, I hear of Sir John Borcsewer⁸ and Christopher Hanson that Harry the VIth is in a place in Yorkshire (*which*) is called Coroumbre, such a name it hath, or much like. And there is siege laid about, and divers esquires of the Earl of Northumberland and (*have*) gathered them together a five or six thousand men, to byger (*fight*)⁹ with the siege, that in the mean while Harry the Sixth might have have been stolen

¹ Thomas Lord Roos.

² [Er is evidently a contraction for *earlier*, but Fenn translates it *sooner*.]

³ [Fenn translates, *as you would*.]

⁴ Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was taken and beheaded.

⁵ Sir Richard Fynes was at this time Lord Dacre, but he was not killed in this battle.

⁶ This number is less than that given by [some of] our historians.

⁷ William Paston I believe is here meant.

⁸ Sir John Bourchier, query?

⁹ [Byger here is *bicker*, to skirmish, rather than to fight: it occurs again a few lines below. The slaying of 4000 men out of 5000 seems an exaggerated statement.]

away at a little postern on the back side; at which byker be slain four thousand men of the north, Sir Robert of Ocle (*q. if Ogle?*), and Conyers Iyeth the siege on our side, and they it is that have done this act. Some say the queen, Somerset, and the prince should be there. Item, it is talked now for truth the Earl of Northumberland¹ is dead. Item, the Earl of Devonshire is dead justly. Item, my Lord Chancellor² is to York. Item, the king and the lords come not here before Whitsuntide³ as it is said.

Item, Sir, soon upon the chief baron's coming I shall send you a letter with God's

grace, who preserve you, and have you in his blessed keeping.

Your

THOMAS PLAYTERS.⁴



Thomas Playters

London, Saturday, 18th of April, 1461. 1. E. IV.

At Cockermouth was the Earl of Wiltshire taken, and these other doctors. Item, some men talk Lord Welles, Lord Willoughby, and Scales be on live (*alive*).

Item, Sir Robert Veer is slain in Cornwall, as it is took for truth.

LETTER CLXIV.—(I. vol. iv. p. 3.)

We have here a most curious account of the difficulties started, and the delays craved, in a suit at law, and we might easily mistake this for a modern letter from a solicitor to his client. It shows us likewise that the difference of manners nearly four hundred years ago and at present is not so great as we are too apt to think it.

To my right reverend and worshipful John Paston, Esq., or to my mistress his wife.

AFTER my most special recommendation, like your mastership (*to*) weet that the matter for you and my mistress your mother against Powtrell and Tanfield hath been called upon as diligently and as hastily this term as it might be, and alway days given them by the court to answer; and then they took small exceptions and trifled forth the court; and alway excused them because the bill is long, and his counsel had no leisure to see it; and they prayed hearing of the testament of my master your father,⁵ and thereof made another matter, and argued it to put them from it, because they had emparled⁶ to us (*craved respite of us*) before; and then Hillingworth, to drive it over this term, alleged variance betwixt the bill and the testament, that John

Damme was named in the testament Joh Dawme,⁷ in which case now the court must have sight of the said testament, wherefore ye must send it up the beginning of the next term, or else we shall have no speed in the matter. And therefore, mistress, if my master be not come home, and ye have not the said testament in your keeping, that then it please you to speak unto my mistress your mother-in-law⁸ for the said testament, that I might readily have it here, and that it be sealed in a box and sent to me, and I shall keep it safe with God's grace.

And as for tidings in good faith we have none, save the Earl of Wiltshire's⁹ head is set on London Bridge.

Master William (*Paston*) is ridden him to

¹ By this account it appears that the Earl of Northumberland was not slain in the battle, but died of his wounds some days after.

² George Nevile, Bishop of Exeter, and Lord Chancellor.

³ Whitsunday, 20th of May.

⁴ Thomas Playters was of a good family in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and at this time seems to have been an attendant about the court. In 1623 the family was honoured with the title of baronet.

⁵ Sir William Paston, the judge, who died in 1444.

⁶ [Emparled is the licence or privilege of a defendant, granted on motion, to have delay of trial, to see

VOL I.

if he can settle the matter amicably by talking to the plaintiff, and thus to determine what answer he shall make to the plaintiff's action.]

⁷ [This is a most curious objection to have made at a time when the orthography of the language was wholly unsettled, and when proper names were diversely written, even by their owners. In the originals of these letters variations are constantly occurring.]

⁸ Dame Agnes Paston, the widow of the judge.

⁹ James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, was taken at the battle of Towton, and soon afterwards beheaded. He had been twice Lord High Treasurer.

my mistress Poynings, and as for Master Poynings himself, she letteth as though she wist not where he were.

A gentleman that came from York told me my master was heyl (*healthy*) and merry, and rode to meet the king coming¹ from Middleham castle.

Berwick² is full of Scots, and we look by

likelihood after another battle now betwixt Scots and us.

And I pray Jesu have you in his blessed keeping.

Your .

THOMAS PLAYTERS.

April, 1461.

1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXV.—(III. vol. i. p. 227.)

This letter, without either date, name or direction, we may discover, from the contents, was written by one of John Paston's sons, soon after the accession of Edward IV. to the throne; and gives a curious representation of the state of affairs in the county of Norfolk at this important period. The reason for this secrecy of address was, lest some one of the Lancastrian party should get possession of the letter, and so discover the sentiments of the Pastons respecting public affairs.

I RECOMMEND me to you, and let you weet, that notwithstanding tidings come down as ye know that people should not come up till they were sent for, but to be ready at all times; this notwithstanding, most people out of this country have taken wages, saying, they will go up to London; but they have no captain nor ruler assigned by the commissioners to await upon, and so they straggle about by themselves, and, by likeliness, are not like to come at London half of them; and men that come from London say there have not passed Thetford not passing 400; and yet the towns and the country that have waged [*hired*]³ them shall think they be discharged; and therefore if these lords above wait after more people in this country, by likeliness it will not be easy to get without a new commission and warning, and yet it will be thought right strange of them that have waged people, to wage any more, for every town hath waged, and sent forth, and are ready to send forth, as many as they did when the king sent for them before the field at Ludlow;⁴ and they that are not gone be going in the same form.

Item, there was shrewd rule toward in this

country, for there was a certain person forthwith after the journey at Wakefield⁵ gathered fellowship to have murdered John Damme, as is said.

And also there is at the castle of Rising,⁶ and in other two places, made great gathering of people and hiring of harness, and it is well understood they be not to the king ward, but rather the contrary, and for to rob.

Wherefore my father⁷ is in a doubt whether he shall send my brother up or not, for he would have his own men about him if need were here; but, notwithstanding he will send up Dawbeney his spear and bows with him; as Stapleton⁸ and Calthorp or other men of worship of this country agree to do; wherefore demean you in doing of your errands thereafter; and if ye shall bring any message from the lords, take writing, for Darcot's message is not verily believed because he brought no writing.

Item, this country would fain take these false shrews, that are of an opinion contrary to the king and his council, if they had any authority from the king to do so.

Item, my brother is rode to Yarmouth for to let bribers (*hinder plunderers*) that would have robbed a ship under colour of my Lord of Warwick, and belong nothing to them ward.

JOHN PASTON.

1461. 1 E. IV.

¹ This shows that the king was not yet returned out of Yorkshire to London since the battle of Towton.

² Henry VI. and his queen after the battle escaped to Berwick, and from thence retired to Edinburgh.

³ Penn translates this *engaged*.

⁴ Battle at Mortimer's Cross near Ludlow, 2nd of February, 1460, between Edward, then Duke of York, and the Lancastrians under Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, who were routed. Henry VI. was then in London, under the direction of the Earl of Warwick.

⁵ Battle of Wakefield, wherein Richard Duke of York was killed, fought 31st of December, 1460.

⁶ In Norfolk, it is now a fair and venerable ruin.

⁷ John Paston, Esq.; he died in 1466.

⁸ Sir Miles Stapleton; he died about 1466.

LETTER CLXVI.—(IV. vol. i. p. 231.)

By this account it appears that Lord Montagu must have marched very soon after the battle of Towton to the siege of Carlisle; but our historians are silent on this subject. J. Paston does not appear to have been knighted at the coronation, John Markham and William Yelverton were called to the degree of serjeants, in 1440, and in 1444 both made judges; the former succeeded as chief justice of the King's Bench in 1462. Below the direction of this letter, and in a more modern hand, is written, "J. Paston, wh^o others imbilled to be made knights at the coronation of E. y^e iiith."

To my right good master, John Paston, in all haste.

AFTER my most special recommendation, please your mastership weet; the king, because of the siege of Carlisle, changed his day of coronation to be upon the Sunday next after Saint John Baptist, to the intent to speed him northward in all haste. And how be it, blessed be God, that he hath now good tidings that Lord Montagu hath broken the siege, and slain of Scots six thousand, and two knights, whereof Lord Clifford's brother is one, yet notwithstanding he will be crowned the said Sunday.

And John Jenney informed me, and as I have verily learned sithen (*since*) ye are inbilled to be made a knight at this coronation; whether ye have understanding beforehand, I wot not; but and it like you to take the worship upon you, considering the comfortable tidings aforesaid, and for the gladness and pleasure of all your well-willers, to the pine and discomfort of all your ill-willers, it were time your gear necessary on that behalf

were purveyed for: and also ye had need hight¹ you (*come*) to London, for as I conceive the knights should be made upon the Saturday before the coronation. And as much as may be purveyed for you in secret wise without cost I shall bespeak for you, if need be, against your coming, in trust of the best; nevertheless if ye be disposed, ye had need send a man before in all haste, that nothing be to seek. William Calthorp is inbilled, and Yelverton is inbilled, which caused Markham; because Yelverton looked to have been chief judge, and Markham thinketh to please him thus. And as for the matter against Pontrell,² we can no farther proceed till we have my master your father's testament; I sent my mistress a letter for it. No more, but I pray Almighty Jesu have you in his keeping.

YOUR THOMAS PLATERS..

London,
May or June, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXVII.—(II. vol. iv. p. 7.)

In Letter L. we have seen that the Duke of Norfolk reported that Sir John Fastolf had given him Caister: we find he has now asserted his claim, and seems to be in possession: and though this letter contains nothing very curious, yet as it relates to Caister and to the possession of that estate, it was proper to give it to the reader, as it leads to a previous knowledge of circumstances, which a few years after brought on the regular siege of that place, the account of which is both remarkable and curious. It seems by this letter that the Duke of Norfolk was at this time keeping his secret house at the lodge, where the writer of this letter was not permitted to speak with him. The order for the establishment of the secret house is given in the Earl of Northumberland's Household-Book, where it is said that "at certain times of the year the nobility retired from their principal mansion to some little adjoining lodge; where they lived private, no longer kept open house, but put their servants to board-wages, dismissed part of them to go to their friends, and only retained a few of the most necessary about their person." Edward IV. was crowned on Monday the 29th of June, 1461; and from the mention of his coronation the exact date of this letter is ascertained. Corpus Christi day is the Thursday after the octave of Whitsunday.

To my right reverend and worshipful master, my master John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful master, I lowly recommend me unto your good mastership, pleasest you to weet that I have been at Framlingham, and spake (*with*) Richard Southwell to have his advice in this matter, wherein he would give me but little counsel,

and said ye were strangely disposed, for ye

¹ [There is no authority, we believe, for this translation of *hight*, although it here appears to be the meaning. The original may probably have been *pyght*, to place or make ready.]

² [Powtrel in a previous letter.]

trusted no man; and had much language which the bearer hereof shall inform your mastership.

And as for the letters, they were delivered my lord at the lodge, but I could not speak with his lordship, and such time as they were delivered Fitzwilliam was there, which is now keeper of Caister, and what time as (*when*) my lord had seen the letters, he commanded him to avoid [*leave*], and so he did; and then my lord sent for Southwell, and in the mean time my lord sent a man to me and asked me where ye were, and I told him ye were with the king, and so he sent me word that an answer should be made by Southwell to the king, saying that two or three heirs had been with my lord and showed their evidence, and delivered it to my lord, saying they have great wrong, beseeching my lord that it might be reformed; wherefore he commanded me that I should go home, for other answer could I none have; so I abode (*waited*) upon Southwell to have known my lord's answer to the king, which answer Southwell told me was, that he writeth to the king that certain points in your letters be untrue, and that he shall prove (*at*) such time as he cometh before the king, beseeching the king to take it to no displeasure, for he is advised to keep it still unto the time that he hath spoken with his highness, for he trusteth to God to show such evidence to the king and to the lords that he should have best right and title thereto; and so he sent a man forth to the king this day; it were right well done ye awaited upon his man coming, that ye might know the ready intent of my lord's writing.

Bartholomew Ellis hath been with my lord, and made a release to my lord; and Sir William Chamberlaine was there two days before I came thither, I can think for the same matter; and Thomas Fastolf was there the same time that I was there, and as I am informed they have delivered my lord certain evidence; wherefore me seemeth it were right well done, saving your better advice, to come home and seal up your evidence, and have them with you to London, to prove his title nought. There be but two or three men within the place, and if ye think it best to do it send word, and I suppose a remedy shall be had.

Also, I hear no word of Master William, nor of the writs for the parliament. Also it is told here that Todenham and Heydon have a pardon of the king, and that they shall come up to London with the Lady of Suffolk to the coronation; also as for the letter that ye sent to Thomas Wingfield, I have it still, for he is at London; some men say he moved my lord for to enter, and some say Fitzwilliam is in default, so I can see there is but few good. Also my master Sir Thomas Howes shall send a letter to the person ye weet of for to deliver you the gear at London the next week. My right worshipful and reverend master, Almighty God preserve you. Written at Norwich, on the morrow after Corpus Christi day.

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.

Norwich,
Friday, 5th of June,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXVIII.—(V. vol. i. p. 233.)

*The manners of the times being what I wish to point out, this letter affords a remarkable instance of the superstition of that age. Holy Innocents, or Childermas day, is the 28th of December, a day reputed so unlucky, that during the year many people even now (this is observed likewise in the 'Spectator') will not begin any new piece of work on that day of the week on which it happens. In the year 1460 this *unfortunate* day fell on a Sunday; at that time therefore they must reckon forwards in the next year for the weekly Childermas day, according as it happened in the December of the year preceding; as the 28th of June, in no year, could be on the same day of the week as the 28th of December in the same year; but it would seem that at this time they observed only the 28th day of every month as a Childermas day, and therefore ominous. Supposing it to have been either way, we here find this piece of superstition countenanced by a priest and celebrated preacher; for such we must suppose Fryar Brakle, the person appointed to preach at St. Paul's at so public a time as the day preceding a coronation.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Heylesdon, in Norfolk, in haste.

AFTER due recommendation had; please it your mastership to weet, that as for Playters | he shall excuse the writ of the parliament, &c.
As touching my Master Howard, I cannot

yet speak with him nor with Montgomery neither; but as for the day of the coronation of the king, it shall be certainly the Monday next after Midsummer, and it is told me that ye amongst others are named to be made knight at the coronation, &c.

Item, it is said, that the coronation done, the king will into the north part forthwith; and therefore shall not the parliament hold, but writs shall go into every shire to give them that are chosen knights of the shire day after Michaelmas; this is told me by such as are right credible.

Master Brakle shall preach at Paul's on Sunday next coming, as he told me, and he told me, that for cause Childermas day fall on the Sunday, the coronation shall on the Monday.

Written in haste at London, the Sunday next tofore Midsummer.

Your right poor servant,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Sunday, 21st of June,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXIX.—(III. vol. iv. p. 11.)

[Common swearing is stated by the historians to have been very prevalent prior to and during this period; but we have in these letters met with few expressions tending to oaths; in this one, however, the writer first says *perde*, meaning *par Dieu*; a little farther he writes "by God;" and he concludes with a still stronger adjuration.]

To my master, Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and mine especial good master, I recommend me to you with all my service, beseeching you heartily, at the reverence of God, to help me now in the greatest extremity that I came at since my great trouble with Ingham.

It is not out of your remembrance how Twyer in Norfolk vexeth me both by noise and searching mine house for me, so that there I cannot be in quiet, and all that, I am verily ascertained, is by Heydon's craft; and here in the king's house aneust (*by means of*) Howard, where I had hoped to have relieved myself, I am supplanted and cast out from him by a clamour of all his servants at ouce; and ne (*nothing*) were, only that his disposition accordeth not to my poor conceit, which maketh me to give less force, because I desire not to deal there (*where*) bribery is like to be used, else by my truth this unhappy unkindness would I trow have killed me.¹ I pray you at the reverence of Jesus Christ to inform

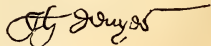
my Lord of Warwick of me; *perde* (*par Dieu*) I have done him service; I was with him at Northampton, that all men know, and now again at St. Alban's, that knoweth James Ratcliffe, and there lost I twenty poundsworth horse, harness, and money, and was hurt in divers places. I pray you to get me his good lordship, and that I may be toward him in Norfolk in his courts holding, or else, if anything he has to do; and that ye will get me a letter to Twyer to let me sit in rest, for now if I made any fellowship against Twyer,² I can have no colour, now the sheriff and I be out; so I must keep me apart, which I am loath to do, by God, if I might better do.

I beseech you to send me your intent by the next man that come from you; I should have come to you, but, so help me God, my purse may no farther.

The Trinity preserve you. Written hastily at York, &c.

Yours, to his power,

THOMAS DENYES.



York, before July, 1461.

1 Ed. VI.

¹ [The foregoing sentence is very obscure, but it stands thus, without any explanation, in Fenn's translation, and corresponds with the original as he has given it. We are, however, inclined to think there has been an error in the transcription, and that it should read thus:—and nothing were (*i. e.* there were no causes) save only that his disposition accordeth not to my poor conceit, (*i. e.* that his disposition, being greedy, accordeth not to my poor wit or reason, which maketh me to give less, for because I desire, &c. The use of the word *for*

before *because* is not unfrequent in our earlier writers.]

² [That is, used any collected force against Twyer.]

LETTER CLXX.—(IV. vol iv. p. 15.)

I think this letter was written about the beginning of Edward IVth's reign; but of that I cannot be certain. It shows Waryn Herman to be a troublesome neighbour. [Church of Burlingham seems to have been a sturdy opponent of the clergy, for though his goods are seized and himself thrown into prison, he avows what he has already done and said, and threatens damage to a greater person and to a greater extent than what he had already inflicted.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you that ye will send me word in haste how ye be agreed with Witchingham and Inglos for that matter that ye spake to me of at your departing, for if I should purvey either wood or hay it should be bought best cheap betwixt this and Saint Margaret's mass (20th July), as it is told me. As for Appleyard he come not yet to this town since he come from London; I have sent to Sir Bryse to let me have knowledge when he cometh to town, and he hath promised that I shall have knowledge, and when he cometh I shall do your commandment. My mother bade me send you word that Waryn Herman hath daily fished her water all this year, and therefore she prayeth you to do therefore, while ye be at London, as ye think best. Church¹ of Burlingham was taken and brought to the castle yesterday by the bishop's men, and all his goods be seized for that he oweth to the bishop; and the said Church saith, as for that he hath said of them that he hath appealed before this time, he will

avow it, and abide thereby; and saith that he will appeal one that hath more nobles than they have all that he hath spoken of yet, and that shall avail the king more than they have all that he hath spoken of yet, but what he is he will not name till he know more. I trow but if (*unless*) there be the great labour made against him, he is like to have great favour of them that have been his supporters; men think, that have spoken with him, that he hopeth to have good help; I pray God that the truth might be known.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me another sugar-loaf, for my old is done; and also that ye will do make (*have made*) a girdle for your daughter, for she hath need thereof. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, in haste, on the Tuesday next before Saint Thomas's day.

Paper is dainty.²

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Tuesday,
end of June or beginning of July,
about 1461. 1 Ed. IV.

LETTER CLXXI.—(V. vol. iv. p. 19.)

This letter was written in the beginning of July in the year 1461, 1 E. IV. and relates to election matters. The multitude of commons must mean such as possessed freehold lands to the yearly value of 40s.; for in the eighth and tenth years of the reign of Henry VI. acts of parliaments passed to restrain all those from voting for knights of the shire who did not possess that property, &c. See 8 H. VI. c. vii. and 10 H. VI. c. ii. The last sentence is a prettily-turned compliment upon his mistress, Margaret Paston. It appears from the following letters that the writer of this was murdered a very few days after he wrote it, by a party in the interest of the House of Lancaster. [The Commons' testimonial seems not to have been confined to freeholders, but to be from the people generally. We have transposed this and the following letter from Fenn's arrangement, as it is clear that Berney's letter was written after Denyes' death. This letter must therefore have been written before July 10.]

To my right noble and worshipful mistress, my Mistress Paston, or to William Paston, if she be absent.

RIGHT noble and worshipful mistress, I recommend me to you with my poor service, and forsomuch as I hear nothing of my master

your husband's coming hastily home; and though he come or come not, it were expedient

¹ Whom Church means to appeal, or for what offence, does not appear, though it seems to be for some misdemeanor for which a fine would accrue to he king. [*Appeal* is here used in the sense of *accuse*.]

² "Paper is deynti;" this, I believe, is the only letter in which a want of paper is complained of. The letter is written upon a piece nearly square, out of which a quarter had been cut before the letter was written.

that the king were informed of the demeaning of the shire, therefore I send to you a testimonial which is made by a great assent of great multitude of commons to send to the king; I pray you for the good speed thereof that ye all haste possible ye like to send it to my said master if he be with the king, else find the mean to send it to the king though my master be thence; beside further that ye vouchsafe to let diligent labour be made to a sufficient number to assael for my master alone, for if both hold not I would one held.

I pray you that it like you to send for my master, William Paston, and show him all this, and that it were hasted, for on the adversary's part Judas sleepeth not.

Berney promised to have sent, but for our Lord's love trust not that, for I see his sloth

and silly labour, which is no labour, and I would full fain speak with you, &c.

My master, your husband, will peradventure blame us all if this matter be not applied, for he may not of reason do so largely herein by his might, because he is elyted (*elect*ed),¹ as the commons might wisely do with help of his favour if it were wisely wrought. If my master William Paston ride hastily from a x dayes (*within ten days*) to London, I will with him if he send me word. The Holy Trinity preserve you.

Written rudely in haste the Sunday, &c.

Men say, send a wise man on thy errand and say little to him, wherefore I write briefly and little.

THOMAS DENYES.

Sunday.

July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXII.—(VI. vol. i. p. 237.)

[We have in this letter a very curious instance of the tendency to defamation and exaggeration, arising from limited publicity. After the press had come fully into operation, such unfounded charges as are here made could never have been hazarded, as they would have been followed by instant contradiction and the disgrace of the libeller. Fenn remarks: "Private duelling was unknown here at this period, and long after; the king's licence for a combat was necessary to be obtained; this procured, the combat proceeded publicly; in all matters of treason the vanquished party was immediately executed." The principle, however, avowed in this letter, seems to approach very closely to the modern practice; one party accuses the other of asserting falsehoods, and offers to make it good as "a gentleman."]

To the worshipful John Paston, and William Rokewode, Esq., and to overreach (each) of them.

RIGHT worshipful cousins, I recommend me to you; and forasmuch as I am credibly informed how that Sir Myles Stapylton, knight, with other ill-disposed persons, defame and falsely noise me in murdering of Thomas Denyes, the coroner; and how that I intend to make insurrections contrary unto the law; and the said Stapylton farthermore noiseth me with great robberies, in which defamations and false noisings the said Stapylton, and in that his saying, he is false, that knoweth God, &c. And for my plain acquittal, if he or any substantial gentleman will say it and avow it, I say to it contrary; and by licence of the king to make it good as a gentleman. And in this my plain excuse, I pray you to open it unto the

lords, that the said Stapylton, &c. make great gatherings of the king's rebellions (*rebels*) lying in wait to murder me; and in that I may make open proof. Written in haste the 10th day of July, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEY.

Remember to take a writ to choose coroners in Norfolk.

10th of July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

¹ [*Elected* does not appear to convey a right meaning, as, if elected, he would surely have been able to do more "largely." We think it more probably means *elided*—left or struck out. We think the meaning to be that if left out in the presentation of the testimonial to the king, he could not use his might so largely in favour of the commons as he could otherwise do.]

LETTER CLXXIII.—(VI. vol. iv. p. 21.)

This letter is undoubtedly written by John Paston to his wife Margaret Paston; it is therefore difficult to say why he directs to her as to his cousin. I suppose from the late change of government he was cautious of being known to correspond with any one, lest he should be suspected by either party; and as this letter was on matters relative to an election of knights of the shire, he might be particularly careful not to have his sentiments known, fearing another change might take place, as the times were so unsettled. Sir John Howard was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk at this time, though the under-sheriff seems to have been the manager in these election disputes. J. Paston's advice concerning the election seems not only judicious, but calculated to promote the peace of the county; a thing at this period much to be desired by the new king.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that the under-sheriff doubteth him of John Berney, wherefore I pray ye bring them together, and set them accord [*in agreement*]¹ if ye can, so that the said under-sheriff be sure that he shall not be hurt by him nor of his countrymen; and if he will not, let him verily understand that he shall be compelled to find him surety of the peace to agree on this head, and that shall neither be profitable nor worshipful; and let him weet that there have been many complaints of him by that knavish knight, Sir Miles Stapylton,² as I sent you word before, but he shall come to his excuse well enough so he have a man's heart, and the said Stapylton shall be understood as he is, a false shrew, and he and his wife and other have blavered (*blabbed or prated*) here of my kindred in hoder moder (*hugger-mugger, clandestinely*), but, by that time we have reckoned of old days and late days, mine

shall be found more worshipful than his and his wife's, or else I will not for his gilt gypcer *purse*).

Also tell the said Berney that the sheriff is in a doubt whether he shall make a new election of knights of the shire, because of him and Grey, wherein it will be better for him to have the sheriff's good will.

Item, me thinketh for quiet of the country it were most worshipful, that as well Berney as Grey should get a record of all such that might spend forty shillings a-year, that were at the day of election, which of them that had fewest to give it up as reason would.³ Written at London, on Relick Sunday.⁴

Item, that ye send about for silver according to the old bill that I sent you from Lym.

JOHN PASTON.

London, Sunday,
12th July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXIV.—(VII. vol. iv. p. 25.)

This is an answer to the preceding letter, and is plainly written by Margaret Paston to her husband John Paston, though it has no direction: it informs him what she had done towards executing his commands, and gives him further information. Richard Cheyne was parson of Little Snoring at this time, and John Fowler of Great Snoring. [The setting of the parson in the stocks, and the personating of Scottish soldiers in order to extort money, are two curious incidents. The Scotch had been brought in by Queen Margaret, and had probably received letters of safe-conduct for their return.]

Margaret Paston to John Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to you; please you to weet that I have sent to my cousin Berney, according to your desire in the letter that ye did

write on Relick Sunday to me, whereupon he hath written a letter to you and another bill to me, the which I send you. He told the messenger that I sent to him, that the under-

¹ [Fenn translates *through*.]

² Sir Miles Stapylton, knight, of Ingham, died in 1466, and was there buried; his first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Simon Felbrigg; his second was Catherine, daughter of Thomas de la Pole, second son to the Earl of Suffolk; she was living in 1464, and was most probably the lady here mentioned.

³ [This seems to have been a doubtful or contested return for a member for the county between Berney and Grey. John Paston's recommendation is a sort of scrutiny, probably not so expensive a proceeding then as it is now.]

⁴ Relick Sunday is the Sunday following the translation of St. Thomas à Becket.

sheriff needeth not to fear him, nor none of his, for he said, after the election was done, he spake with him at the Grey Friars, and prayed him of his good mastership, and said to him that he feared no man of bodily harm but only Twyer and his fellowship.

Item, Sir John Tatersalle, and the bailiff of Walsingham, and the constable, hath taken the parson of Snoring and four of his men, and set them fast in the stocks on Monday at night; and as it is said they should be carried up to the king in haste, God defend it but they be chastised as the law will. Twyer and his fellowship beareth a great weight of Thomas Denyes' death in the country about Walsingham, and it is said there, if John Osbern had ought him as good will as he did before that he was acquainted with Twyer he should not have died, for he might *(have)* ruled all Walsingham as he had list, as it is said.

Item, William Lynys, that was with Master Fastolf, and such other as he is with him, go fast about in the country and bear men a [*in*]

hand, priests and other, they be Scots, and take bribes of them and let them go again. He took the last week the parson of Fritton, and but for my cousin Jernyngham the younger they would have led him forth with them, and he told them plainly if they made any such doings there, but (*unless*) they had the letter to show for them, they should have aley on their bodies (*be beaten*);¹ it were well done that they were met with betimes. It is told me that the said William reporteth of you as shamefully as he can in divers places. Jesu have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday after Relick Sunday.

If the under-sheriff come home I will assay to do for him as ye desired me in your letter; as for money, I have sent about, and I can get none but 13s. 4d. since ye went out; I will do my part to get more as hastily as I may.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Wednesday,
15th July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXV.—(VII. vol. i. p. 239.)

It was certainly incumbent upon the king to pay every mark of attention to those who had espoused his cause, and helped to seat him on the throne, and to make them appear with consequence amongst their tenants and dependents as noticed and rewarded by him: at the same time, it was certainly a wise measure in the prince to endeavour to attach to his interest as many as he could of those who had espoused a contrary party. This Edward seems to have been endeavouring to accomplish, though, if we may suppose the writer of this letter unbiassed, he began already to neglect those who had served him in the most critical time.

To the worshipful John Paston, and to my cousin William Rokewood, Esq. with my Lord of Canterbury.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, praying you heartily to labour for that the king may write unto me, giving me thanking of the goodwill and service that I have done unto him, and in being with him against his adversaries and rebellions, as well in the north as in this country of Norfolk. And in that the king should please the commons in this country; for they grudge, and say how that the king receiveth such of this country, &c. as have been his great enemies, and oppressors of the commons; and such as have assisted his highness be not rewarded; and it is to be considered, or else it will hurt, as me seemeth by reason; and in

aid of this changeable rule it were necessary to move the lords spiritual and temporal, by the which it might be reformed, &c. And in case that any of mine old enemies, Todenham, Stapylton, and Heydon, with their affinity, labour the king and lords unto my hurt, I am and will be ready to come to my sovereign lord for my excuse, so that I may

¹ [The original has "they should aley on her bodys." Fenn's interpolation appears unnecessary and his explanation too precise. We have not met with the word *aley* elsewhere in our older writers, but think it signifies here the same as *alewe* used by Spencer and others for howling, crying through suffering.]

come safe for unlawful hurt purveyed by my said enemies. No more at this time, but God preserve you in grace. Written at Withingham, the 16th day in the month of July,

in the first year of the reign of Edward IV.
JOHN BERNEY.

Please it you move this unto my Lords Canterbury, Ely, Norwich,¹ &c.



Withingham,
16th of July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

This letter was sealed with an oval seal of wax, having a braid of twine round it, of which we give an engraving.

LETTER CLXXVI.—(VIII. vol. iv. p. 29.)

This is the letter mentioned by Margaret Paston in the previous one to her husband, and explains the behaviour of the under-sheriff, who appears to have been in an opposite interest to Berney, and in the party of the lately dethroned King Henry. The other letter sent by Berney is No. clxxii. dated the 10th of July, 1461. ¶

To the right worshipful John Paston, Esq. in haste.

SIR, I recommend me to you, &c. and as for my plain disposition towards the under-sheriff, I will him no bodily hurt, nor (*he*) shall not be hurt by me, nor by no man that I may rule; but the commons through all the shire be moved against him for cause of his light demeaning towards them for this election of knights of the shire for the parliament; and I suppose, if that he will, he may be hastily eased; as thus, let him make notice unto the said commons that this their election shall stand, or else let him purchase a new writ, and let him make writing unto

them what day they shall come, and they to make a new election according unto the law; and, Sir, I pray you say to him, that it is not his honesty to lie upon too² many men, noising them rebyliones (*rebels*) of Norfolk, and B. (*Berney*) their captain. No more to you at this time, but I have sent you two letters within this eight days. Written the 17th day of July, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEY.

Friday,
17 July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXVII.—(IX. vol. iv. p. 31.)

This and some of the foregoing letters are very curious, as they afford a striking picture of the times, and display the misfortunes ever attendant on the people at large when so violent a convulsion happens in the government of a kingdom.

To my worshipful husband, John Paston, this letter be delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that I am desired by Sir John Tatersalle to write to you for a commission, or an oyer and terminer, for to be sent down into this country to sit upon the parson of Snoring, and on such as was cause of Thomas Denyes' death, and for many and great horrible robberies; and as for the costs thereof the country will pay therefore, for they be sore afraid but (*unless*) the said death be chastised, and the said robberies, they are afraid that more folks shall be served in like wise. As for the priest

and six of his men that be taken, they be delivered to Twyer, and four be with them of the country's cost for to be sent with to the king; and if they be brought up, at the reverence of God do your part that they escape not, but that they may have the judgment of the law and as they have deserved; and be committed to prison, not to depart till they be inquired of their foresaid robbery by such

¹ Thomas Bouchier was Archbishop of Canterbury. William Gray Bishop of Ely, and Walter Hart Bishop of Norwich.

² [Too in original; Fenn in error has so.]

a commission that ye can get, that the king and the lords may understand what rule they have been of, not only for the murders and the robberies, but as well for the great insurrection that they were like a made (*to have made*) within the shire. The priests of Caister they be straitly take heed¹ at by Robert Harmerer and other, so that the said priests may have nothing out of their own nor of other men's but they be ransacked, and the place is watched both by day and night; the priests think right long till they (*have*)

tidings from you. At the reverence of God beware how ye go and ride, for it is told me that ye be threatened of them that be naughty fellows, that hath been inclining to them that hath been your old adversaries.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Saturday next before Saint Margaret.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Saturday,
18th July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXVIII.—(X. vol. iv. p. 33.)

This letter appears to have been written in 1461, as it insinuates a suspicion of treason against Sir Thomas Todenham, &c. who was a faithful Laucastrian, and suffered on the block, for corresponding with the late queen, in the February following the date of this letter.

To the right worshipful Sir and my good master, my master, John Paston, be this delivered.

REVEREND and right worshipful Sir, and my good master, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that there is raised a slanderous noise in this country upon my master Yelverton, and you, and my master Alyngton, which I suppose is done to bring you out of the conceit of the people, for at this day ye stand greatly in the country's conceit.

It is said by Heydon and his disciples that my master Yelverton, and ye, and my master Alyngton, should have do (*made*) one Sir Thomas Tartyssale² parson of the east church of Warham,³ and chaplain to the Prior of Walsingham,⁴ to put into the parliament a bill of divers treasons done by my Lord of Norwich,⁵ Sir Thomas Todenham, and John

Heydon, and ye should have set (*there*) to your seals; and if that Heydon had been six hours from the parliament longer than he was, there had been granted an oyer determiner to have inquired of them, &c. This was told yesterday in right worshipful audience, and among the thriftiest men of this country; and they said right shrewdly, for my Lord of Norwich hath so flattered the lay people as he hath ridden about [*in*] his visitation that he hath their hearts; wherefore and (*if*) it please you to let me have knowledge what ye would I should say to it, where as I hear any such language, I will do my part, and have done hitherward as I have thought in my conceits best, &c. and if there be any other service that ye will command me, I am and will be ready at your commandment with the grace of God, who ever have you in his blessed keeping. Written at Wighton in haste, on Saint James's day.

By your servant,

JAMES GLOYS.

Wighton,
Saturday, 25th July,
1461. 1 E. IV.

James Gloys

24th of May, 1472, and was buried directly before the rood loft in his own cathedral.

¹ ["Tak hede" of the original is perhaps intended for *attended*; or it may mean that they be "streyteley" watched, only that this is said afterwards.]

² [Probably the same name, though not the same person, as the Tatersalle of several preceding letters.]

³ There were three churches in the parish of Warham.

⁴ Thomas Hunt was admitted prior in 1437.

⁵ Walter Lyhart [or Hart, as he is named in page 138,] was declared Bishop of Norwich by papal provision in 1446. He was a man of singular wisdom, and, being of a peaceable disposition, was much beloved by the citizens. In 1449 he entertained King Henry VI. at his palace in Norwich, and being a man of great political abilities, was sent in the same year ambassador into Savoy. He died on Whitsunday,

LETTER CLXXIX.—(XI. vol. iv. p. 37.)

This letter is not the only one from John Paston, to his wife, which is directed to his cousin Margaret Paston. He had therefore, I suppose, at this time some particular reasons for concealing his correspondence; it might be either for some public reason on the late change of government, or for some private reason on his own affairs. John Berney was the second son of John Berney, Esq. of Reedham, and inherited from his father estates in Witchingham; he was uncle to Margaret Paston, and died in July 1461. His worth in money and plate was considerable for that age, and the caution which was taken in those unsettled times to conceal property is worthy observation. As Thomas Holler was become, by the decease of John Berney, the only person who had knowledge of some of his property, the desire which Paston expresses that his wife should first get information, and then acquaint him with his friend's death, seems to insinuate doubts of his honesty respecting the goods, &c. The hint, too, that he has a written account of them, any implies the same suspicion.

To my worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I RECOMMEND me unto you, letting you weet that your uncle John Berney is dead, (*on*) whose soul God have mercy! desiring you to send for Thomas Holler, and inquire of him where his good is, and what he is worth, and that he take good heed to all such goods as he had, both moveable and unmoveable, for I understand that he is worth in money five hundred marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and in plate to the value of other five hundred marks, beside other goods; wherefore I would ye should not let him weet of his decease unto the time that ye had inquired of the said Thomas Holler of all such matters as be above written; and when he hath informed you thereof, then let him weet verily that he is dead, desiring him that no man come into his place at Reedham but himself, unto the time that I come.

Item, I let you weet that great part of his

good is at William Taverne's as I understand. Thomas Holler will tell you justly the truth as I suppose, and desire him on my behalf that he do so, and there is writing thereof; and tell Thomas Holler that I and he be executors named, and therefore let him take heed that the goods be kept safe, and that nobody know where it shall lie but ye and Thomas Holler; and Thomas Holler, as your uncle told me, is privy where all his good lieth, and all his writings; and so I will that ye be privy to the same for casualty of death, and ye two shall be his executors for me as long as ye do truly, as I trow verily ye will. Written at London the 28th day of July.

I require you be of good comfort, and be not heavy [*slow*] if ye will do aught for me.

YOUR JOHN PASTON.

London, Tuesday,
28th July, 1461. I E. IV.

LETTER CLXXX.—(XII. vol. iv. p. 39.)

We have here an instance of the tumultuous and desperate manner in which distresses were made; in this case corn seems to have been the object. It appears that another entry of the same kind was intended. It is not said which of his sons J. Paston had sent. [In cases of disputed right, which this appears to have been, force is yet frequently used on both sides, as the readiest means of trying the right legally, although only incidentally, upon the question of assault or riot. The levy would appear to have been intended on the crops, but "Blake had hoom the corn" before the 24th of August, a rather early harvest.]

To my worshipful and right good master, John Paston, Esq.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my right good master, I recommend me to you, and heartily I thank your good mastership that ye liked to send my master your son to Sporde with such fellowship as ye did, for which I am ever bound to do you service, praying you of your good continuance.

Sir, the cause, why I came not was this,

I was fallen sick with an axis¹ (*access*), and truly that caused me that I and my fellowship tarried, and so because thereof I caused my lady to write a special letter to my Lord Scales, but for all that Blake hath home the corn

¹ An axes, or access, from the French word *access*, means the fit or paroxysm of a disease, and in this place most probably may be considered as an ague fit.

in my Lady of Suffolk's name; and the cause why I sent no word of my sickness was that I would not mine enemy should be rejoiced by the knowledge of my sickness, so God help me; the fellowship that was ready to go was right sorry that they might not go farther with me, and my lord's and my lady's¹ will was that they should have gone farther, but if I had been hele (*well*) and not sick, there should have come a worshipful fellowship out of Suffolk of so little warning, but truly I lay sick at Ipswich of the access both Sunday and Monday; but, Sir, since ye have showed me so kindly your good

mastership, I pray you I may have your fellowship ready at another time to help to execute a commission touching Blake, and that they may be ready within two days after ye have warning; and, Sir, my service is ready to you at all times, as ye show me great cause to do you service.

Written at Thelverton, the Wednesday next before St. Bartholomew's day (24th of August) in haste.

Your servant,

WILLIAM JENNEY.²

Thelverton, Wednesday,
August, 1461 or 1462. 1 or 2 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXI.—(XIII. vol. iv. p. 43.)

This letter was written whilst the Earl of Warwick was in the North Marches, endeavouring to manage matters with regard to the Scots. He went thither soon after the coronation, and before the king had called a parliament. What the matter was in which J. Paston had been so strangely treated does not appear. The account of his son is curious, and shows us that in that remote age money was in a certain degree as necessary as it would be now, for the bringing a young gentleman properly forward amongst his equals. It appears from several of these letters that J. Paston kept his children rather too strait for a man of his birth and fortune.

To my right worshipful and reverend master, John Paston, at Norwich.

Right worshipful Sir, and my right honourable master, I recommend me lowly to you; and please your mastership to weet that my master Clement your brother and Playters wrote a letter to my master your son yesterday, the tenor of which was how ye were entreated there, and as ye desired me, so I informed them the matter along, for they wist not of it till I told them, and they wrote the more pleynerly [*fully*]³ inasmuch as a worshipful man rode the same day, and bare the letter to my said master your son.⁴

The Lord Bourchier is with the king, and my Lord Warwick still in the north, &c.

Item, Sir, this day came one John Waynfleet from the king straitway, and he is of mine acquaintance: and he told me there was no voice nor speaking about the king of

that matter, and I told him all the matter along how ye were entreated, which he will put in remembrance in any place that he cometh in in Suffolk or Essex as he goeth homewards, for he oweth no good-will to your adversary. And the said Waynfleet told me that he knoweth for certain the king cometh not into Norfolk till he hath been upon the marches of Wales, and so there is no certainty of his coming this many days; he told me he left the king with a small fellowship about him.

And I inquired (*of*) him of the guiding of my master your son, which he commended greatly, and said that he stood well in conceit, and daily should increase; and he was well in acquaintance and beloved with gentlemen about the king; but he said there shall nothing hurt him but your straitness of

¹ I suppose these mean the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk.

² William Jenney, of Knotishall, in Suffolk, was an eminent lawyer, and in 1477 was made a judge of the King's Bench: he died in 1483, aged above sixty years. I believe this letter was written in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. On the back is written, in an ancient hand, "A friendly l're of W. Jenney, who after became a mortal enemye."

³ [Fenn translates "plainerly" (*plainly*)] It is apparently from the French *plein*.]

⁴ [This is a curious exemplification of the evils arising from uncertain means of communication. It would appear from this that the contents of the letter, as far as regarded matters of importance, must depend much upon the trust-worthiness of the messenger. Here, as the messenger was "a w'rehyfull man," the letter was written "more pleynerly" than it would otherwise have been. "The matter in which J. Paston, had been so strangely treated," was probably the quarrel with Howard's men, alluded to by his son in Letter clxxxii.]

money to him, for without he have money in his purse, so as he may reasonably spend among them, else they will not set by him; and there be gentlemen's sons of less reputation, that hath money more liberal ten times than he hath; and so in that the said Waynfleet said it were full necessary for you to remember, &c.

As for tidings here be none new, &c. I trust I shall bring you a letter from my master your son, or than (*when*) I come, for which I shall rather than fail abide one day

the longer; and Jesu have you, my right honourable master, in his merciful governance, and preserve you from adversity. Written at London on St. Bartholomew's even.

I can speak with no man but that think the guiding of your adversary hath been in many causes right strange, and, as it is supposed, that he shall understand at the parliament, but for God's sake have men enough about you, for ye understand his unmannerly disposition.

Your beadsman and servant,

JOHN RUSSE.



London, Sunday,
23 August, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXII.—(XIV. vol. iv. p. 47.)

This is a most curious letter, and exhibits an undisguised picture of great men in the fifteenth century. J. Paston shows himself a persevering advocate, and my Lord of Essex a true courtier. He at last mentions the business to the king, and informs J. Paston of the king's conversation on the subject, which certainly redounds much to his majesty's honour. The hint from Berners, my Lord Treasurer's man, is cleverly introduced, and the manner of making the compliment to the Earl of Essex is ingeniously contrived, and shows Berners to be one who understood his business well. He was most probably a relation of the Earl's family, as the Earl's brother, John Bouchier, married Margery, a daughter of Sir Thomas Berners, of West Horsely, in Surrey.

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, Esq., dwelling in Heylesdon, be this letter delivered in haste.

Most reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me heartily, and submit me lowlyly, to your good fatherhood, beseeching you for charity of your daily blessing; I beseech you to hold me excused that I sent to you none erst (*no earlier*) no writing, for I could not speed to mine intent the matters¹ that ye sent to me for. I have laboured daily my Lord of Essex,² Treasurer of England, to have moved the king both of the manor (*of*) Dedham and of the bill copy of the court roll every morning afore he went to the king, and often times inquired of him and (*if*) he had moved

the king in these matters; he answered me nay, saying it was no time, and said he would it were as fain sped as I myself, oft times delaying me, that in truth I thought to have sent you word that I feeled by him that he was not willing to move the king therein; nevertheless I laboured to him continually, and prayed Baronners (*Berners?*) his man to remember him of it. I told often times to my said lord that I had a man tarrying in town that I should have sent to you for other sundry matters, and he tarryed for nothing but that I might send you by him an answer of the said matters; other times beseeching him to speed me in these matters for this cause, that ye should think no default in me for remembering in the said matters.

And now of late, I remembering him of the same matter, inquired if he had moved the king's highness therein, and he answered me that he had felt and moved the king therein,

¹ ["The matters" is omitted in Fenn's translation.]

² Henry Viscount Bouchier, Lord Treasurer of England, was created Earl of Essex in 1461, in the first year of the reign of Edward IV. He was a man of great knowledge and application to business, and at different times filled most of the great offices of state. His death happened in 1483. He was uncle to the king by his marriage with a sister of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, the king's father.

rehearsing the king's answer therein, how that when he had moved the king in the said manor of Dedham, beseeching him to be your good lord therein, considering the service and true part¹ that ye have done and owe to him, and in especial the right that ye have thereto; he said he would be your good lord therein, as he would be to the poorest man in England, he would hold with you in your right, and as for favour he will not be understood that he shall show favour more to one man than to another, not to one in England.

And as for the bill, copied of the court roll, when he moved to him of it, he smiled, and said that such a bill there was, saying that ye would have oppressed sundry of your countrymen of worshipful men, and therefore he kept it still, nevertheless he said he should look it up in haste, and ye should have it.

Baronnors undertook to me twice or thrice that he should so have remembered his lord and master that I should have had it within two or three days; he is often times absent, and therefore I have it not yet, when I can get it I shall send it you, and of the king's mouth, his name that take it him.²

I send you home Peacock again, he is not for me, God send grace that he may do you good service, that by estimation is not likely; ye shall have knowledge afterward how he hath demeaned him here with me; I would, saving your displeasure, that ye were delivered of him, for he shall never do you profit nor worship.

I suppose ye understand that the money that I had of you at London may not endure with me till that the king go into Wales and come again, for I understand it shall be long ere he come again, wherefore I have sent to London to mine uncle Clement to get an hundred shillings of Christopher Hanson your servant, and send it me by my said servant, and mine harness with it, which I left at London to make clean.

I beseech you not to be displeased with it, for I could make none other chevisance (*con-*

tract),³ but I should have borrowed it of a strange man, some of my fellows, which I suppose should not like you and ye heard of it another time. I am in surety where as⁴ I shall have another man in the stead of Peacock.

My Lord of Essex saith he will do as much for you as for any esquire in England, and Baronnors his man telleth me, saying, "your father is much beholden to my lord, for he loveth him well;" Bernners⁵ moved me once, and said that ye must needs do somewhat for my lord and his; and I said I wist well that ye would do for him that lay in your power, and he said that there was a little money betwixt you and a gentleman of Essex called Dyrward, saying that there is as much between my said lord and the said gentleman, of the which money he desireth your part.

It is talked here how that ye and Howard should have striven together on the Shire day,⁶ and one of Howard's men should have stricken you twice with a dagger, and so ye should have been hurt but for a good doublet that ye had on at that time, blessed be God that ye had it on! No more I write to your good fatherhood at this time, but Almighty God have you in his keeping, and send you victory of your enemies, and worship increasing to your life's ending.

Written at Lewes,⁷ on St. Bartholomew's even.

By your servant and elder son,

JOHN PASTON.

Lewes, in Sussex,
23 August, 1461 or 1462.
1 or 2 E. IV.

³ [Original, *cheysaunce*—perhaps choosance or choice, though chevisance may be right. *But* is so continually used in the sense of except that an explanation at every time of its occurrence is unnecessary.]

⁴ [I am in surety where I can procure, &c.]

⁵ [So spelt in this instance in the original.]

⁶ This was probably occasioned by some election or other dispute which arose at the county court.

⁷ The date of this letter is, in some measure, ascertained by the place from which it is written, as the king in the summer of 1462 took a progress through several parts of his kingdom; namely, to Canterbury, Sandwich, Lewes, &c., and so along the coast to Southampton, from whence he proceeded to the marshes of Wales.

¹ [Fenn has *heart* by mistake.]

² [That is,—and out of or from the king's mouth, his name that took it to him.]

LETTER CLXXXIII.—(XV. vol. iv. p. 53.)

[The economy of the royal household is incidentally shown in this letter. It appears that not all the followers of the court were provided for at the king's expense, and that the cost of attending the king in his journeys was greater than when he was resident in London. The quarrel with Howard is again alluded to.]

To his right reverend and worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother, I recommend me to your good brotherhood, desiring to hear of your welfare and good prosperity, the which I pray God increase to his pleasure and your heart's ease, certifying you that I have spoken with John Russe, and Playters spoke with him, both (*also*)¹ on Friday before St. Bartholomew; he told us of Howard's guiding, which made us right sorry, till we heard the conclusion that ye had none harm.

Also I understand by William Peacock that my nephew had knowledge thereof also upon Saturday next before St. Bartholomew in the king's house; notwithstanding upon the same day Playters and I wrote letters unto him, rehearsing all the matter, for cause if there were any questions moved to him thereof, that he should tell the truth, in case that the questions were moved by any worshipful man, and named my Lord Bouchier,² for my Lord Bouchier was with the king at that time.

I feel by William Peacock that my nephew is not yet verily acquainted in the king's house, nor with the officers of the king's house; he is not taken as none [*one*] of that house, for the cooks be not charged to serve him, nor the sewer to give him no dish, for the sewer will not take no men no dishes 'till they be commanded by the controller; also he is not acquainted with nobody but with Wykes,³ and Wykes had told him that he would bring him to the king, but he hath not yet done so; wherefore it were best for him to

take his leave and come home till ye had spoken with somebody to help him forth, for he is not bold enough to put forth himself; but then I considered that if he should now come home, the king would think that when he should do him any service somewhere,⁴ that then ye would have him home, the which should cause him not to be had in favour; and also men would think that he were put out of service. Also William Peacock telleth me that his money is spent, and not riotously, but wisely and discreetly, for the costs is greater in the king's house when he rideth then ye wend it had been, as William Peacock can tell you; and therefore we must get him one hundred shillings at the least, as by William Peacock's saying, and yet that will be too little, and I wot well we cannot get forty pence of Christopher Hanson, so I shall be fain to lend it him of mine own silver; if I knew verily your intent were that he should come home I would send him none; therefore I will do as me thinketh ye should be best pleased, and that me thinketh is to send him the silver; therefore I pray you (*as*) hastily as ye may send me again five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and the remanent I trow I shall get upon Christopher Hanson and Loket. I pray you send me it as hastily as ye may for I shall leave myself right bare, and I pray you send me a letter how ye will that he shall be demeaned. Written on Tuesday after St. Bartholomew, &c. Christus vos conservet!

By

CLEMENT PASTON.

Clement Paston

August, about 1461 or 1462.
1 or 2 E. IV.

¹ [We know of no authority for such a translation of *both*. We think it means *both of us* or *both together*. The context supports this view, as it adds that he (Russe) told us (C. Paston and Playters) of Howard's guiding, &c.]

² William Viscount Bouchier, eldest son of Henry Bouchier, who was created Earl of Essex in June 1461: he was cousin to Edward IV. and died in the life-time of his father.

³ John Wykes was an usher of the king's chamber, and a friend and cousin of J. Paston's.

⁴ [Fenn translates "any service, it were," &c. The original is "ony stvie sō wer y^t," &c.]

LETTER CLXXXIV.—(XVI. vol. iv. p. 59.)

[This letter chiefly relates to personal and private matters; but the notice of Agnes Paston is remarkable and characteristic. She everywhere appears to be a strong-willed and energetic woman.]

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, and my good master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership, praying you to weet that I was at Blake's and spake with his wife, and she saith he was not at home this three weeks, he rideth up the country to take accounts of bales, and that this day sev'night he should have sate in Caister by you upon accounts, and from thence he should have ridden to Lynn, and that he shall be at home on Monday at night next coming; wherefore I have left my errand with her; but she saith that he shall not mown coming (*be able to come*) to you, for my lady have sent for him in great haste, both by a letter and by a token, to come to her as hastily as he may; notwithstanding she shall do the errand to him.

As for Yelverton I did a good feel to inquire of James Skinner when the said Yelverton should go to London; he said not this sev'night, he could not tell what day till he had spoken with his son, his son should come to him ere his master should ride; I shall inquire more at Walsingham; and for God's love be not too long from London, for men say there, as I have been (*informed*) that my Lord of

Gloucester should have Caister, and there is great noise of this revel that was done in Suffolk by Yelverton and Jenney; and your well-willers think that if they might prevail in this, they would attempt you in others; but cease their power and malice, and preserve you from all evil, and at the reverence of God let some interposition go a-twixt you and my mistress your mother ere ye go to London, and all that ye do shall speed the better, for she is set on great malice, and every man that she speaketh with, knoweth her heart, and it is like to be a foul noise (*over*) all the country without it be soon ceased.

Also, Sir, it is told me that my Lord of Norfolk is coming to Framlingham, and that ye be greatly commended in his household, therefore it were well done, me seemeth, that ye spake with him.

The Holy Trinity keep you. Written at Norwich, the Thursday after St. Matthew.

Your poor priest,

JAMES GLOYS.

Norwich,
Thursday, 24th of September,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXV.—(VIII. vol. i. p. 241.)

The writer in the former part of this letter seems to accuse his master Paston of delay in fulfilling the trusts in Sir John Fastolf's will, to whom he was executor.

To my full worshipful, special good master, John Paston, Esq., abiding at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and some time my most special good master, I recommend me unto your good mastership, with all my poor service, if it may in any wise suffice; and farthermore, Sir, I beseech you, now being in your country, where ye may daily call unto your master Sir Thomas Howes, once to remember my poor matter; and by your discretions to take such a direction therein, and so to conclude, as may be to your discharge and to my furtherance, according to the will of him that is passed unto God, whose soul I pray Jesu pardon! for truly, Sir, there was in him no fault, but in me only, if it be not

as I have remembered your mastership afore this time. For truly, Sir, I dare say I should have had as special and as good a master of you as any poor man, as I am, within England should have had of a worshipful man, as you are, if ye had never meddled the goods of my master Fastolf; and as much ye would have done and laboured for me in my right, if it had been in the hands of any other man than of yourself only. But, I trust in God, at your next coming, to have an answer such as I shall be content with; and if it may be so, I am and shall be your servant in that I can or may, that knoweth

our Lord Jesus, whom I beseech save, and send you a good end in all your matters, to your pleasure and worship everlasting. Amen. Written at London, the 4th day of October.

As for tidings, the king will be at London within three days next coming, and all the castles and holds both in South Wales and in North Wales are given and yielded up into the kind's hand; and the Duke of Exeter¹ and the Earl of Pembroke² are fled and taken [to] the mountains, and divers lords with great puissance are after them. And the most part of gentlemen, and men of worship are come in to the king, and have grace of all Wales. The Duke of Somerset,³ the Lord Hungerford,⁴ Robert Whityngham, and other four or five esquires, are come into Normandy out of Scotland, and as yet they stand strait under arrest; and as merchants that are come late thence say, they are like to be deemed

and judged prisoners. My Lord Wenlock,⁵ Sir John Cley, and the Dean of St. Severin's have abode at Calais these three weeks, and yet are there, abiding a safe conduct, going upon an embassy to the French king.⁶ And Sir Walter Blount,⁷ treasurer of Calais, with a great fellowship of soldiers of Calais, and many other men of the marches, have lain, and yet do, at a siege afore the castle of Hammes, by-side Calais, and daily make great war, either party to other.

Item, I send unto you a copy of a letter that was taken upon the sea, made by the Lord Hungerford and Whityngham.

Item, we shall have a great embassy out of Scotland in all haste of lords.

At your commandment, and servant,

HENRY WYNDESOIRE.

London,
4th of October, 1461. 1. E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXVI. (IX. vol. i. p. 247.)

This copy is written by Henry Windsor, and having the same paper-mark with the foregoing original letter, is that which was sent with it to his master Paston, to whom it is directed. We here see the suspicious state the adherents of the queen were in abroad, though in the kingdom of her cousin germain. What a fall for poor King Henry, from a throne to the attendance of four men and a boy.

To the Queen of England, in Scotland.

MADAM, please it your good God, we have since our coming hither written to your highness thrice; the first we sent by Bruges, to be sent to you by the first vessel that went into Scotland; the other two letters were sent from Dieppe, the one, by the carvel in the which we came; and the other, in another vessel; but, madam, all was one thing in substance, of putting you in knowledge of the king⁸ your uncle's death, whom God assoyl (*pardon*), and how we stood arrested, and do yet. But on Tuesday next we trust and understand we shall up to the king⁹ your cousin germain. His commissaries, at

the first of our tarrying, took all our letters and writings, and bear them up to the king; leaving my Lord of Somerset in keeping at (*the*) castle of Arques; and my fellow Whityngham and me (for we had safe conduct) in the town of Dieppe, where we are yet. But on Tuesday next we understand that it pleaseth the said king's highness that we shall come to his presence: and are charged to bring us up Monsieur de Cressell, now bailiff of Canse,¹⁰ and Monsieur de la Mot.

Madam, ferth (*fear*) you not, but be of good comfort, and beware that ye adventure not your person, nor my lord the Prince, by

¹ Henry Holland; he married lady Anne, sister to Edward IV., but continued firm to the interest of the House of Lancaster.

² Jasper Tudor, of Hatfield, half-brother to Henry VI.; he was afterwards Duke of Bedford.

³ Henry Beaufort, he was beheaded in 1463, after the battle of Hexham.

⁴ Robert, Lord Hungerford, was beheaded in 1463.

⁵ John Lord Wenlock left the York party, and joined that of Lancaster, but neglecting to come up

in time at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, Edmund Duke of Somerset cleft him down with a battle-axe.

⁶ Lewis XI.

⁷ He was created Lord Montjoy in 1465, and obtained part of the estates of the attainted Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire.

⁸ Charles VII., king of France, died 22nd of July, 1461, aged 60.

⁹ Lewis XI. king of France.

¹⁰ [Probably Cannes.]

the sea, till ye have other word from us; in less than (*unless that*) your person cannot be sure there as ye are, and that extreme necessity drive you thence. And for God's sake (*let*) the king's highness be advised the same; for as we be informed the Earl of March¹ is into Wales by land, and hath sent his navy thither by sea. And madam, think verily, we shall not sooner be delivered but that we will come straight to you, without death take us by the way; the which we trust he will not, till we see the king and you peaceable again in your realm; the which we beseech God soon to see, and to send you that your highness desireth. Written at Dieppe, the 30th day of August.

Your true subjects and liege men,

HUNGERFORD.²

WHITYNGHAM.³

Dieppe,
30th of August, 1461.
I. E. IV.

At the bottom of the copy of the letter is added :—

These are the names of those men that are in Scotland with the queen.

The King Harry is at Kirkhowbre (*Kirkcudbright*) with four men and a child.

Queen Margaret is at Edinburgh and her son.

The Lord Roos and his son.⁴
John Ormond.
Will'm Taylboys.
S^r. John Fortescue.
S^r. Tho^s Fynderm.
S^r. Edmund Hampden.⁵
S^r. Henry Roos.
John Courtney.
Myrfyn of Kent.
Waynesford of London.
Tho^s Thompson of Guynes.
Tho^s Brampton of Guynes.
John Audeley of Guynes.
Langheyn of Ireland.
Tho^s Philip of Ipswich.
Danson.
Tho^s Burnby.
Borret of Sussex.
S^r. John Welpdale.
Mr. Rog^r Clerk of London.
John Retford late Coubitt.
Giles Seintlowe.
John Hawt.

LETTER CLXXXVII.—(X. vol. i. p. 251.)

I have given this as the contents of a paper which accompanies the two foregoing letters, but how far they merit any regard I cannot pretend to say. The writer seems to doubt the truth of many of the assertions, as he adds to almost every one of them "as they say." It relates to the return of the Duke of Somerset, &c. from France into Scotland, to join Queen Margaret, and must have been written in or about 1462.

Memorandum. This is the confession of sixteen Frenchmen with the master, taken at Sheringham (in Norfolk) the third week of Lent.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and let you weet, that I have been at Sheringham and examined the Frenchmen, to the number of sixteen with the master; and they tell that the Duke of Somerset is into Scotland, and they say the Lord Hungerford was on Monday last past afore Sheringham into Scotland ward in a kervel (*carvel*) of Dieppe, no great power with him, nor with

the said duke neither. And they say that the Duke of Burgoyne⁵ is poisoned and not like to recover.

And as for powers to be gathered against our welfare; they say there should come into [*the*] Seine 200 great forstages⁶ out of Spain from the king there;⁷ and 300 ships from the Duke of Bretagne⁸ with the navy of France, but they be not yet assembled, nor

¹ Edward IV. king of England.

² See note to Letter clxxxv.

³ Sir Robert Whityngham and Sir Edward Hampden were slain at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471.

⁴ Thomas Lord Roos and his son Edmund: the former was beheaded in 1463, after the battle of Hexham.

⁵ Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. [This rumour was incorrect.]

⁶ Large ships were ships with forestages or fore-castles.

⁷ Henry IV. king of Spain, died in 1474.

⁸ Francis II. last Duke of Bretagne, died in 1488.

victual there purveyed, as they say, nor men. And the king of France¹ is into Spain on pilgrimage with few horse as they say; what the purpose is they cannot tell certain, &c.

In haste at Norwich.

The king of France hath committed the rule of Bourdeaux unto the merchants of the town, and the browd² that be therein to be at their wages; and like as Calais is a staple of wool here in England, so is that made a staple of wine.

John Fermer prisoner saith, one John Giles, a clerk that was with the Earl of Oxford, which was some time in King Harry's house, was a privy secretary with the Earl of Oxford; and if any writing were made by the said earl, the said Giles knew thereof in this great matter.

Norwich,
March, 1461-2.
2 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.—(XVII. vol. iv. p. 63.)

John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded his father in 1461, 1 E. IV. and I should suppose came to age very soon after, for, in November 1462, he by the king's command was to keep his Christmas at his castle of Holt in Denbighshire, when he appears to have been married, and was then most probably past his twenty-first year. This letter might therefore be written on the 12th of October, 1461, and at latest on the same day in 1462. We are here acquainted with the parade and attendance expected by the nobility from their retainers and vassals on the delivery of their lands, and on their taking possession of offices.

To our trusty and entirely beloved servant, John Paston, Esq.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT well-beloved servant, I greet you heartily well, certifying that we shall be at full age on Friday next coming, wherefore, well counselled by the lords of our counsel, and other of our counsel, that ye, one of our servants of household with others, be with us at London on Friday or Saturday next coming at the furthest, to accompany us then to our worship, for we shall have then livery of our lands and offices; and that ye fail us not as ye will have our good lordship in time coming, and also that ye do warn our feedmen³ and servants, such as be

nigh to you, that they be there then in our livery. Written the 12th day of October.

NORFOLK.⁴

Monday, 12th of October, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXIX.—(XVIII. vol. iv. p. 65.)

Though this letter has neither address nor subscription, it appears to have been written to John Paston in the beginning of Edward the Fourth's reign, and the business it contains seems to be relative to Sir John Fastolf's affairs and will. Thomas Howes was parson of Blofield from about 1460 to 1471, and his cheve-day or thriving-day, I should suppose means the day on which he received the profits of his living; Saint Andrew's day being now a usual time for the payment of compositions for tythes. The writer of this letter was a friend of J. Paston, and from the advice which he here gives him, may be supposed one who knew mankind.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto you, &c. the cause of my writing is this,

I was at Blofield on Saint Andrew's day (30 November) with the parson, and he under-

¹ Lewis XI. king of France, died in 1483.

² This word is imperfect in the original paper, perhaps it means they bruit.

³ Feedmen were those who held lands by an acknowledgment of any superiority to a higher lord.

⁴ John Mowbray was the last Duke of Norfolk of that name, and married Elizabeth, daughter of that renowned warrior John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury; he died suddenly at Framlingham Castle, in Suffolk, on Wednesday the 17th of January, 1475.

stood none other but that I came to see his mastership, for it was his cheve day; and there I moved unto him of the land in Sochewerk (*Southwark*), how I heard say when I was in Suffolk that Jenney made his avaunt that he had given you and him a chop [*exchange*] of twenty pound of land; and incontinent he told me all the matter better than I could tell him; and as I could understand in him by my simple wit that he was of knowledge of all the matter, for he said that Yelverton came down from the Bench, and plete (*pleaded*) the matter, and for cause ye were so laches (*negligent*), and came not in time, the matter yede (*went*) amiss, and so I understood by him that he is disposed to excuse Yelverton in all matters rather than you, but nevertheless make good cheer to the parson as though ye understood that he were your friend till time ye have your intent, but beware and trust him not, but make you so strong in lordship and in the law, that ye reek not (*care not*) much whether he be good or bad, &c.

Item, ye be much beholden unto Thomas Greene and to Edmund Wydeville, brother to Hugh Fenn, for they report much worship of your mastership in all matters, and that causes the substance of the town to owe you service, and be well disposed unto your mastership, and that understand I every day; and if it please you, when we parted at Norwich in your place, ye said unto me ye would somewhat do by my simple advice; and this is mine advice, that in any wise ye make Hugh Fenn and Thomas Greene on your counsel, if ye can find in your heart, for I dare say as I hear and understand that they owe you right good will and service, for a man may hear by the half what the whole meaneth; and therefore for God's love remember you

well in this matter, for and (*if*) it stood on my life I would do as I advise you, &c.

Item, for our Lord's love go through with William Worcester, and also please Chrewys as ye think in your heart best for to do, for it is a common proverb "A man must sometimes set a candle before the devil;" and therefore though it be not aldermost meet and profitable, yet "of two harms the least is to be taken."

Item, ye shall understand that the parson told me that they were summoned to come for the probate of the testament at conversion of Saint Paul (25 January), and therefore I would advise you in any wise that ye should understand the matter wisely ere ye come home, for I suppose that Yelverton and he is confederate and accord together.

Item, when I was at Blofield with the parson, there came Robert Fyrass (*Ferrers*?) to him, saying that he is compelled by the king's commissioners to have harness after his degree, and that the parson sent him to my mistress that she should deliver him harness, and I understand she will not till ye come home, but ye shall understand it is an alms deed to do him good, understanding his necessity and need that he stand in, and also understanding that he was kinsman to my master, and it is a common proverb, "A man should keep from the blind and give it to his kind," and every man will say well thereof, the more because he is a gentleman, and of his kin, and in great penury; and therefore for the love of God remember such matters. No more at this time, but God have you in his keeping both body and soul, and speed you in your matters as well as I would ye should do.

December, or January, between 1460 and 1462.
1 and 2 E. IV.

LETTER CXC.—(XIX. vol. iv. p. 69.)

At this time Henry VI. was in Scotland, and his queen in France, soliciting assistance from Lewis XI. though with little success; the report therefore of an invasion with so large an army could have no real foundation; it was, however, the news of the day, and alarmed the friends of Edward. On the seal of this letter is the impression of the bear, the well-known cognizance of the Earl of Warwick. It shows both the popularity and power which this great peer had at this time when his friends used this device of his on their seals.

To my right worshipful Sir and master, mine master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and master, I recommend me to you, and please you that the church

of Drayton is or shall be resigned in haste into the bishop's hands by Sir John Bullock, de-

siring you heartily that ye like I may have the presentation of the next avoidance for a nephew of mine, called Sir Reynold Spendelowe, which I trust your mastership will agree to make in your name and mine as was last, &c.¹ And, Sir, please you also that I have had divers communications with Worcester since Christmas, and I feel by him utterly that he will not appoint in other form than to have the lands of Fairchilds, and other lands in Drayton, to the sum of ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of you properly, beside that that he desireth of mine master, whom God assoil, which matter I remit to your noble discretion.

And as for answer of the bills that I have, I have been so sekelele (*sickly*) since Christmas that I might not yet done them, but I shall in all haste, wherein ye may excuse you by me if ye please till the next term, at which time all shall be answered by God's grace, who preserve you and send you the accomplishment of your desires, &c.

Item, Sir, please your mastership, it was

letten me weet in right secret wise that a puissance is ready to arrive in three parts of this land, by the mean of King Harry and the queen that was, and by the Duke (*of*) Somerset and others, of six score thousand men, and their day, if wind and weather had served them, should have been here soon upon Candlemas; at Trent to London ward, they should have been by Candlemas, or soon after, one part of them, and another part coming from Wales, and the third from Jersey and Guernsey, wherefore it is well done ye inform mine Lord Warwick, that he may speak to the king that good provision be had for withstanding their malicious purpose and evil will, which God grant we may overcome them, and so we should I doubt not if we were all one; there be many meddlers, and they be best cherished which would hurt much if these come too, as God defend, &c.

THOMAS HOWES.

February, 1461-2.

1 E. IV.

LETTER CXCI.—(XX. vol. iv. p. 73.)

The persons here mentioned to have been summoned to attend the king under his writ of Privy Seal were at this time I suppose suspected not only of concerning themselves in the affairs of their late Sovereign Henry VI. but of acting for his interest, particularly Berney and Rough, or such violent proceedings as that of raising the county to apprehend them would scarcely have been commanded: it might however be for some other cause. If William Yelverton had offended, he soon made his peace, for he now was, and continued to be, a justice of the King's Bench. This embassy from Philip Duke of Burgundy fixes the date of this letter to the year 1461-2, as in the beginning of this year his ambassadors arrived.

To my most reverend and worshipful master, my master John Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASETH it your good mastership to understand that I have received a bill of John Boteler, which speaketh of your hay at Hellesdon, and of your barley in other places, but I understand not what ye would I should do therein; nevertheless I shall do make

(*have it made*) ready; and as for your hay I shall tell you when I come home; and as for money at Hellesdon I can none get, and at Swainsthorp I have taken four marks (2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*)

Item, as for tidings, the sessions shall be at Thetford on Wednesday next coming, where I understand Master Berney will be with much people, because there is come to him a privy seal that he should be with the king within six days (*after*) that the privy seal was delivered him, which he cannot do, for the sixth day is to-morrow; there is one come to Felbrigg, to William Yelverton one other, and to Robert Rough another, and none of them will go to the king; and the undersheriff told me that there is come a commis-

¹ The following extracts from the Institution books in the registry of the Bishop of Norwich, ascertain the date of this letter.

Draiton.

"Reg. xi. 124, 29 January, 1460-1. Johnanes Bullock ad presentationem Johis Paston arm. et Tho. Howys Capellani."

"Reg. xi. 131. 15 March 1461-2. Johēs Flourdew ad presentationem eorundem."

It appears from hence that John Bullock resigned the living of Drayton in 1461-2, and on that the 15th of March John Flowerdew was presented thereto and not Sir Reynold Spendelowe.

sion down to his master, that in case they come not up to the king by their privy seals, that then he rear the country, and take them, and bring them to the king wheresoever he be.

Item, James Gresham telleth me the same, and as for tidings from London we hear none, but that John Colman telleth me that if Berney or Robert Rough come up they are like to die.

There be come to London ambassadors from the Duke of Burgundy, which caused the king to speed him the rather to London.

Item, as for any new assizes at Thetford

there is none but that hath hanged this five years, as the sheriff telleth me.

I was purposed to be at home this night till I had your bill, which causeth me to ride on to Drayton for divers things, &c. Almighty Jesu preserve you.

Written at Norwich, the second Monday of clean Lent.

Your poor beadsman and servant,

RICHARD CALLE.

Norwich,

Monday, 15 March, 1461-2.

2 E. IV.

LETTER CXCH.—(XXI. vol. iv. p. 77.)

It appears from this letter that the king in person attended at the assizes in Cambridge, during the time that his judges transacted the business of the Court. The extortions, and other acts of oppression, done by the sheriffs, &c., of counties were at this time very great, and loudly called for reformation. On the back of this letter is written the following memorandum: "Justice Yelverton boasteth of cōmendacon had at the king's hands."

To my right singular master, J. Paston, Esq. in haste, &c.

AFTER due recommendation, please it your mastership to weet, Master Yelverton, justice, said in the sessions that the king should keep his Easter at Bury, and from thence come into this country, and see such riots as have been in this country punished in such form as happily some should hang by the neck; and he told what thank he had of the king at Cambridge, for cause he declared so well the charge of extortion done by sheriffs and other

officers, &c., for the which declaration the king took him by the hand, and said he cowde (*owed*) him great thanks, and prayed him so to do in this country, &c.

In haste, at Norwich, the Wednesday next before the Annunciation.

Your poor JAMES GRESHAM.

Norwich,

Wednesday, 24 March, 1461-2. 2 E. IV.

But this date is not certain.

LETTER CXCH.—(XI. vol. i. p. 253.)

This letter appears to have been written the year after the accession of Edward IV., as in the February preceding this letter John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Aubrey his son, were beheaded. The informations then given might probably make it necessary to have many of their dependants and servants taken into custody and detained in prison. The attention of the Paston's, father and son, to the writer of this letter, who appears to have been a confidential servant of Edward, seems to be directed to the obtaining of his favour with the king on their behalf. Lavenham, in Suffolk, had been in the possession of the De Veres from the reign of Henry I. The Church there is a noble and elegant structure, and was built by them and the family of Spring.

To my right trusty and well-beloved friend, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and mine entirely well-beloved friend, I recommend me unto you, heartily thanking you of your great present of fish, and of the fellowship that my cousin your son showed unto me at Norwich, proposing by the grace of God to deserve it unto you in time to come, in such place as I may do for you. Desiring you specially, whereas a tenant of mine of Lavenham, called John

Fermor, is seized and arrested within the town of Yarmouth, because he dwelled with the Earl of Oxford's son, and proposed to have passed the sea without licence, and standeth out of the conceit of much people, I would desire you that ye would write to the bailiffs of Yarmouth to deliver the said John Fermor to my servant John Breuerigg, bringer of this, with an officer of the said town, to be carried

unto the king's castle of Rising at my cost; there to be examined of certain articles, which I may not disclose till I have spoken with the king's highness. Praying you to write to the said bailiffs that I shall be their sufficient discharge against the king, desiring you to give credence to the bringer hereof, as my very trust is in you.

Written at Lavenham, the 25th day of March.

Your true and faithful friend, having
no blame for my good will,

JOHN WYKES,

Usher of the King's Chamber.

Lavenham,

Thursday, 25th of March, 1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CXCIV.—(XXII. vol. iv. p. 79.)

This letter was most probably written in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. after the executors of Sir J. Fastolf had disagreed amongst themselves; and would scarcely have been worth preserving, but as it mentions 'A Chronicle of Jerusalem,' and 'A History of the Valiant Acts of Sir John Fastolf.' This Bussard appears to have been one of those persons who were employed to transcribe books before the art of printing reached England, and perhaps was likewise concerned in drawing up, as well as in writing, the account of Sir John Fastolf's exploits in France.

Unto my master, Paston, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, and if it like you I have spoken with Bussard, and demanded him if he had any evidence, deeds, or copies, or any other evidence of any place, or of any livelihood that longg^t (*belongeth*) unto my master, and (*he*) saith nay, by his faith and by his truth, for if he had he would send them unto you with a good will; for he saith it should do him none ease, (*they would be of no use to him*). And, Sir, if it please you, I asked him if he knew any evidence that he had delivered unto William Worcester, bill, or deeds, or any other evidence, that should belong unto any purchase, or of any livelihood unto my master's, and he saith nay

truly, for he saith the last time that he wrote unto William Worcester it was before Midsummer and then he wrote 'A Chronicle of Jerusalem,' and the jornes (*journes, valiant exploits*) that my master (*Fastolf*) did while he was in France, that God on his soul have mercy! And he saith that this drew more than twenty whazerys (*wases, bundles*?) of paper, and this writing (*he*) delivered unto William Worcester and none other, nor knoweth not of none other by his faith.

By your man,

JOHN DAVY.

Most probably written after 1460,
and in the beginning of the reign
of E. IV.

LETTER CXCV.—(XXIII. vol. iv. p. 81.)

We have here an exact picture of the times, and are furnished with the steps taken to keep and defend landed property.—Possession seemed to depend entirely upon the number of men the possessor was able to bring together, at a short notice, to resist such a fellowship as his adversary brought to dispossess him. The influence of the great, however, extended far, and if they interfered the others were obliged to submit. This seems to have been the case here, as the heads of both parties were retainers of the Duke of Norfolk. Had they been under different nobles, perhaps a local civil commotion would have been stirred up, and many lives have been lost before the contest had been decided. It is difficult to ascertain the exact year in which this letter was written. I think it must have been in the beginning of king Edward's reign, but I am not certain. [These remarks of Fenn are much too general. In cases of disputed right, as we have before remarked, it was and is not uncommon to have recourse to force as the quickest means of obtaining a legal decision. No doubt the influence of the rich and powerful was great either for good or evil, but the present letter, while it shows the good effects of the Duke of Norfolk's interference, proves that neither party considered themselves "obliged to submit" farther than their own interests prompted them. "A local civil commotion" is wholly gratuitous. Landed as well as other property appears on the whole to have been sufficiently secure and consequently effectually guarded. We shall have to speak of this subject more at length in the subsequent account of the siege of Caister.]

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, be this delivered.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you | of your blessing; please it you to have knowledge that as on Sunday next before

Michaelmas day as my mother came from London ward, she came homeward by Cotton, and she sent for me to Hellesdon to come to her thither, and so I have been in the place ever since: and as soon as Michaelmas day was passed I began to distrain the tenants, and gathered some silver, as much, I trow, as will pay for our costs, and yet I keep here right a good fellowship, and more were promised me, which yet camenot to me, whereby I was near deceived; for when Debenham heard say how that I began to gather silver, he raised many men within one day and an half to the number of three hundred men, as I was credibly ascertained by a yeoman of the chamber of my lord's (*of Norfolk*) that oweth me good will, which yeoman, as soon as he had seen their fellowship, rode strait to my lord and informed him of it; and also he informed my lord how that I had gathered another great fellowship, which fellowship he named more than we were by one hundred and an half, and yet more; and he said unto my lord and my lady, and to their counsel, that without that my lord took a direction in the matter, that there were like to be done great harm on both our parts, which were a great disworship to my lord, considering how that he taketh us both for his men, and so we be known well enough; upon which information, and disworship to my lord, that twain of his men should debate so near him, contrary to the king's peace, considered of my lord and my lady and their counsel, my lord sent for me and Sir Gilbert Debenham to come to him to Framlingham both; and as it fortun'd well, my mother came to me to Cotton not half an hour before that the messenger came to me from my lord, which was late upon Tuesday last past at night, and the next day on the morning I rode to my lord to Framlingham, and so did Sir Gilbert also; and as soon as we were come we were sent for to come to my lord, and when we came to my lord, he desired of us both that we should neither gather no fellowship, but such men as we had gathered that we should send them home again, and that the court should be continued into the time that my lord, or such as he would assign, had spoken both with you, and Yelverton, and Jenney; and that one indifferent man, chosen by us

both should be assigned to keep the place into the time that ye and they were spoken with.

And then I answered my lord and said, how that at that time I had my master within the manor of Cotton, which was my mother, and into the time that I had spoken with her I could give none answer; and so my lord sent Richard Fulmerston bearer hereof to my mother this day for an answer, which answer he should bring to my lord to London; for my lord rode to London ward as yesterday, and the sooner because he trusted to have a good end of this matter and all others betwixt you, which he taketh for a great worship to him, and a great advantage both, and (*if*) he could bring this matter about, for then he would trust to have your service, all which were to him great treasure and advantage.

And this was the answer that my mother and I gave him, that at the instance of my lord and my lady we would do thus much as for to put the court in continuance, and no more to receive of the profits of the manor than we had, and had distressed for, till into the time that she and I had word again from my lord and you; if so were that they would neither make entries nor distrain the tenants, nor keep no court, more than we would do, and we told Richard Fulmerston that this my mother and I did at the instance and great request of my lord, because my lord intended peace, which reasonable we would not be against, and yet we said we knew well that we should have no thank of you when ye knew of it, without it were because we did it at my lord's instance; but before this answer we had received as much silver, full nigh, as Richard Calle sent us books of for to gather it by; and as for the possession of the place, we told him that we would keep it, and Sir Gilbert agreed, so that Yelverton and Jenney would do the same, for it was time for him to say so, for my lord told him that he would set him fast by the feet else, to be sure of him, that he should make none insurrections into the time that my lord came again from London.

I ween, and so doth my mother both, that this appointment was made in good time, for I was deceived of better than an hundred

men and an half that I had promise of to have come to me when I sent for them, this promise had I before that I sent to you the last letter the day after St. Michael. Jenney heard say that I kept Cotton, and he rode to Nacton, and there held a court, and received the profits of the manor.

I beseech you that I may have knowledge in haste from you how ye will that I be demeaned in this matter and in all others, and I shall apply me to fulfil your intent in them to my power by the grace of God, whom I beseech have you in guiding, and send you your heart's desire. Written at Hemnale's

Hall, in Cotton, the Thursday next before St. Faith.

My mother recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to hold her excused that she writeth not to you at this time, for she may have no leisure; the bearer hereof shall inform you whether Jenney will agree to this appointment or not, I think he dare do none otherwise.

Your son and lowly servant,
JOHN PASTON.

Hemnale's Hall, Cotton, Suffolk,

Thursday, October.

Early in the reign of Edward IV., but exact year uncertain.

LETTER CXCVI.—(XXIV. vol. iv.p. 89.

From several of the letters contained in these volumes it appears that proposals for a marriage often originated from the friends of the lady, not that she had any prepossession in favour of the gentleman, but because her friends thought such a match might be proper in respect to worldly matters. This seems to have been the case here, and the grandmother of the young lady wishes the friends of Sir John Cley to be spoken to on this subject, thinking that his son's livelihood would be a sufficient one, and that a marriage might be concluded as times now go, (for that must be the meaning of the words "now in thys world,") on reasonable terms; this marriage however never took effect.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please you to weet that I was at Norwich this week to purvey such things as needeth me against this winter; and I was at my mother's, and while I was there, there came in one Wrothe, a kinsman of Elizabeth Clere's, and he sey (*saw*) your daughter and praised her to my mother, and said that she was a goodly young woman; and my mother prayed him for to get for her one good marriage if he knew any; and he said he knew one should be of a 300 marks (200*l.*) by year, the which is Sir John Cley's son, that is chamberlayn with my Lady of York,¹ and he is of age of eighteen years old; if ye think it be for to be spoken of, my mother thinks that it should be got for less money now in

this world than it should be hereafter, either that one, or some other good marriage.

Item, I spake with Master John Estgate for Pykering's matter after your intent of the matter of the letter that ye sent home, and he said to me he should write to you how he had done therein, and so he sent you a letter, the which was sent you by John Wodehouse's² man with other letters.

As for answer (*of*) other matters, Daubeney telleth me he wrote to you. I beseech Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Caister, the Sunday next after St. Martin.

By your

MARGARET PASTON.

Caister, Sunday, November,
between 1461 and 1465.
1 and 5 E. IV.

¹ Cecily, Duchess of York, 'widow of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and mother of Edward IV. She died in an advanced age, at her castle of Berkhamstead, in May, 1495, and was buried near her husband, in the choir of the collegiate church of Fotheringhay in Northamptonshire.

² John Wodehouse, Esq., of Kimberley, son of the renowned John Wodehouse, Esq., who gained so much honour at the battle of Agincourt; he died in 1465, and lies buried in Kimberley chancel.

LETTER CXC VII.—(XXV. vol iv. p. 91.)

The various matter contained in this letter makes it worthy the reader's notice; the references to the receivers, accounts of Sir John Fastolf show the regularity with which all money and other transactions were entered and kept. The concluding verses furnish us with a specimen of the familiar poetry of the time.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston.

MINE OWN dear sovereign lady, I recommend me to you, and thank you of the great cheer that ye made me here to my great cost and charge and labour. No more at this time, but that I pray you ye will send me hither two ells of worsted¹ for doublets, to happe me this cold winter and that ye inquire where William Paston bought his tippet of fine worsted, which is almost like silk, and if that be much finer than that ye should buy me after seven or eight shillings, then buy me a quarter and the nail thereof for collars, though it be dearer than the other, for I would make my doublet all worsted for worship of Norfolk, rather than like Gonner's doublet.

Item, as for the matter of the nine score pounds asked by my Lady of Bedford² for the manor of West Thurrock, whereas Sir Thomas Howes saith that he hath no writing thereof, but that Sir John Fastolf purchased the said manor, and paid certain money in earnest, and afterwards granted his bargain to the Duke Bedford, and so the money that he took was for the money that he had paid; peradventure Sir Thomas Howes hath writing thereof, and knoweth it not; for if there be any such money paid upon any bargain he shall find it in Kyrlling's books, that was Sir John Fastolf's receiver, and it was about such time as the Duke of Bedford was last in England, which, as it is told me, was the eighth year of King Harry V. (1420), or the eighth year of King Harry VI. (1429); and the sum that he paid for the said bargain was 300 marks (200*l*). Also, he shall find the twenty-second year of King Harry (VI.), or

there about (1443), in the accounts of one of Fastolf's receivers at London, that there was taken of Sir Thomas Tyrell, and of the Duchess of Exeter,³ that was wife to Sir Lewis Johnes, farmer of the said manor, certain money for repayment of part of the said 300 marks. Also he shall find in years after that, or that year, or thereabouts, that Sir John Fastolf received money of my Lord Rivers⁴ that now is, by the name of Richard Wydville, for his own debt due to Sir John Fastolf; wherefore, if Sir Thomas be true to his master, let him do his devoir to make that Worcester, which is upheld by him with the dead's goods, be true to his master, or else it is time for Sir Thomas to forsake him, and help to punish him, or men must say that Sir Thomas is not true; and moreover let Sir Thomas examine what he can find in this matter that I sent him word of, which matter he shall find in the said receiver's books if he list to seek it.

Item, on the day after your departing I received letters by William Roos from your sons to me, and to you, and to Richard Calle, &c.

Item, I shall tell you a tale,
Pampyng and I have picked your male⁵
And taken out pieces⁶ five,
For upon trust of Calle's promise we may
soon unthrive,
And if Calle bring us hither twenty pound,
Ye shall have your pieces again, good and
round;

³ This was most probably Margaret, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Neville, and widow of Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter.

⁴ Sir Richard Wydville, in 1448, was created Baron Rivers of Grafton in Northamptonshire, and elected a Knight of the Garter. His daughter Elizabeth afterwards became the queen of Edward IV., who then advanced her father to the dignity of Earl Rivers. He was seized by the Lancaster mutineers, and beheaded at Banbury in 1469.

⁵ Male, or mail, is a trunk or portmanteau. It is to be observed, that in the original letter the verses do not finish the line, but are written as prose.

⁶ Pieces of money.

¹ Worsted is a small market-town in the most eastern part of the county of Norfolk, formerly famous for the manufacture of those stuffs which still bear its name, and of which, for the worship of Norfolk, J. Paston desired his doublet might be made.

² Jaqueline, daughter of Peter of Luxemburg, Earl of Saint Pol, was the second wife of John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford; she was married to him in 1433, and after his decease in 1435, she became the wife of Sir Richard Wydville, and died in 1472.

Or else if he will not pay you the value of
the pieces, there
To the post do nail his ear,
Or else do him some other wrongs,
For I will no more in his default borrow;
And but if (*unless*) the receiving of my
livelihood be better plied,
He shall Christ's hour and mine clean
tried;¹
And look ye be merry and take no thought,
For this rhyme is cunningly wrought.

My Lord Percy² and all this house
Recommend them to you, dog, cat, and
mouse,
And wish ye had been here still,
For they say ye are a good gill.³
No more to you at this time,
But God him save that made this rhyme.
Written the of Saint Mathe,
By your true and trusty husband,
J. P.

February, between 1461 and 1465.
1 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CXCVIII.—(XXVI. vol. iv. p. 97.)

John Beauchamp, Lord Beauchamp of Powick, in Worcestershire, was so created in 1447. In 1450 he was appointed Lord Treasurer, and became a Knight of the Garter. He died in 1475, 15 E. IV., and was buried in the Church of the Dominican Friars at Worcester.

To mine well-beloved, friend Sir Thomas Howes, Parson of Blofield.

WELL-BELOVED friend I greet you well, and
forasmuch as I understand that William
Worcester, late the servant unto Sir John Fast-
olf, knight, whose soul God assoil! is not had
in favour nor trust with my right well-beloved
friend John Paston, neither with you, as he
saith, namely in such matters and causes as
concerneth the will and testament of the said
Sir John Fastolf; and as I am informed the
said William purposeth him to go into his
country, for the which cause he hath desired
me to write unto you that ye would be a
special good friend unto him for his said

Greenwich,
28th of August,
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.

master's sake, to have all such things as
reason and conscience requireth, and that ye
would be (*a*) mean unto Paston for him in
this matter, to show him the more favour
at this time for this my writing in doing of
any trouble to him, trusting that he will de-
mean him in such wise that he shall have no
cause unto him but to be his good master as
he saith, and if there be anything that I can
do for you, I will be right glad to do it, and
that knoweth Almighty God, which have you
in his keeping. Written at Greenwich, the
28th day of August. J. BEAUCHAMP.

J. Beauchamp

¹ I do not understand this line. [In the transcript it stands—"He shall Crist's ours and mine clene tried." May there not be an error in the transcription? "He shall Christ's *curs* and mine clean *bide*" would give an apposite meaning, and the variations only be such as might easily occur in copying.]

² This must be Henry Lord Percy, son and heir of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, who was

killed at the battle of Towton, in 1461, by Ellenor, grand-daughter and heir of Robert Lord Poynings. His father having been attainted, he continued to be called Lord Percy; but in 1472 was fully restored both in blood and title, the attainder of his father being made void. He was murdered by a tumultuous mob in Yorkshire, in 1488.

³ An agreeable companion.

LETTER CXCIX.—(XXVII. vol. iv. p. 101.)

Sir George Browne, knight, of Beechworth Castle in Surrey, was the second husband of Elizabeth, the sister of J. Paston, and widow of Robert Poyning; this short letter was therefore most probably written by him to J. Paston in the beginning of Edward IVth's reign; it recommends in a friendly manner to him loyalty to the prince upon the throne, and seems to hint at some actions of J. Paston's done contrary thereto, which had come to Sir George's knowledge, and which he would not disclose. [It is a curious specimen of letter-writing, and has no doubt a concealed meaning; whether Fenn has explained the meaning must remain a matter of opinion.]

To my trusty and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, Esq. in haste.

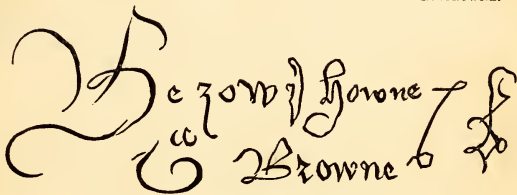
LOYAWLTE, Ayme. (*Love, Loyalty.*)

It shall never come out for me.

By your own

G. BROWNE.

Written most probably between 1461 and 1466. 1 and 6 E. IV.



The image shows a large, ornate handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letter 'G' being particularly large and decorative. The name 'Browne' is clearly legible at the end of the signature.

LETTER CC.—(XXVIII. vol. iv. p. 101.)

We have here a letter written by John Paston to his father, from Lynn in Norfolk, at a time when, by the king's command, he was to convey soldiers from thence to Yarmouth on ship-board, I suppose for foreign service. It appears from hence, likewise, that the soldiers wore the livery of those who retained them.

To my right worshipful father, John Paston.

PLEASE you to weet that I am at Lynn, and understand by divers persons, as I am informed, that the master of Carbrooke¹ would take a rule in the Mary Talbot as for captain, and to give jackets of hislivery to divers persons which he waged by other men, and not by him, being in the said ship; wherefore inasmuch as I have but few soldiers in mine livery here, to strengthen me in that which is the king's commandment, I keep with me your two men Dawbeney and Calle, which I purpose shall sail with me to Yar-

mouth, for I have purveyed harness for them, and ye shall well understand by the grace of God that the said master of Carbrooke shall have none rule in the ships, as I² had purposed he should have had, because of his business;³ and for this is one of the special causes I keep your said men with me, beseeching you ye take it to none displeasure with me, notwithstanding their herden⁴ at Wygenhall shall be done this day, by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping.

² It appears that in this case the master was subordinate to J. Paston, and under his command.

³ [Because of his making himself so busy.]

⁴ I do not understand the meaning of the word herden. [Is it not herding, or assembling? Meaning that notwithstanding their assembling at Wygenhall was required for some purpose, yet in a case of such need he had ventured to retain them.]

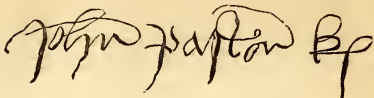
¹ The master of Carbrooke, I believe, means the master of the commandry of Carbrooke in Norfolk, formerly a society of Knights Templars, and the only one in the county, who were bound to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, either as religious devotees or as soldiers to fight against the infidels.

Written at Lynn, the morrow after my departing from you.

Item, as for such tidings as be here Th. shall inform you.

JOHN PASTON.

Written between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.



LETTER CCI.—(XXIX. vol. iv. p. 105.)

As this letter has no subscription, the writer cannot be ascertained, though it appears to be written by one who had some concern at the county court, where election or other country disputes seemed to be expected to come on. He was probably a retainer of some great man or lady whose interest he was to support. The being obliged to send as far as Cambridge for a physician must have been both troublesome and expensive. [It appears to us rather that he was sued for debt. He feared arrest if found in the town, and expected a distress on his property. Without the assistance he prays for, he "must sell or let to farm all that he has."]

To my right worshipful Mistress Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to your good mistress-ship, beseeching you in the way of charity, and as I may be your beadsman and servant, that ye will let me have weeting how I may be ruled against the next shire; it is said there shall be much more people than were the last; and also if I be in my lady's place, or in any other in the town. I shall be taken out. Also, mistress, that my master Radcliff shall take all my cattell (*chattles*) and all other poor good that I have, and so but (*unless*) I may have help of my master and of you I am but lost. Also my servant Maryot will go from my wife to my right great hurt,

wherefore, mistress, I beseech your help in all these, and I shall content the costs as ye shall be pleased, by the grace of God, who ever preserve you, &c.

Also, mistress, I cannot be without your continual help, but I must sell or let to farm all that I have.

Mistress my lady sent to Cambridge for a doctor of physic, if ye will anything with him he shall abide this day and to-morrow, he is right a cunning (*skilful*) man and a gentle.

Written
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCH.—(XXX. vol. iv. p. 107.)

As it is always best to have the characters of the writers of these letters from their contemporaries, I have given this letter as furnishing us with that of Hugh Fenn. The mention of pewter vessels shows us what was then fashionable; and the aunt here mentioned I believe was a Berney. This letter appears to have been written after the decease of Sir John Fastolf, and in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that mine aunt is deceased, whose soul God assoil! and if it please you to send word how ye will that we do for the livelihood that she had at Walcot, whither ye will that anybody take possession there in your name or not; and if it like you to have with you my cousin William her son, I trow ye should find him a necessary man to take heed to your household, and to buy all

manner of stuff needful thereto, and to see to the rule and good guiding thereof, it hath been told me before that he can good skill of such things, and if ye will that I send for him, and speak with him thereof, I shall do as ye send me word, for in faith it is time to crone¹

¹ [Croon is a Scotch word for to hum or talk over, and *crone* appears to be used here in a somewhat similar sense.]

your old officers for divers things, whereof I have known part by Dawbeney, and more I I shall tell you when ye come home.

Also it is thought by my cousin Elizabeth Clere, and the vicar, and others that be your friends, that it is right necessary for you to have Hew (*Hugh*) of Fenn to be your friend in your matters, for he is called right faithful and trusty to his friends that trust him; and, as it is reported here, he may do much with the king and the lords; and it is said that he may do much with them that be your adversaries, and therefore for God's sake, if ye may have his good will, forsake it not; also it is thought the more learned men

ye have of your own country of your counsel, the more worshipful it is to you.

Also, if ye be at home this Christmas, it were well done ye should do purvey a garnish or twain of pewter vessel, two basins and two ewers, and twelve candlesticks, for ye have too few of any of these to serve this place: I am afraid to purvey much stuff in this place till we be surer thereof. The blessed Trinity have you in his blessed keeping. Written the Thursday next after St. Andrew.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Thursday, December,
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV

LETTER CCIII.—(XXXI. vol. iv. p. 109.)

We have here a curious instance of a person illegally recovering an estate by making a great man a party in the proceedings, for such manifestly appears to have been the case here, where Rous takes possession of the manor of East Lexham, and then makes a feoffment of it to the Earl of Warwick, thinking that no one would dare to dispute his title when sanctioned by this nobleman. [We do not see the manifest illegality here, though there may be some hardship. Rous claims in virtue of an entail, and if this really existed, the case is only like many of modern times wherein a purchaser suffers from having accepted a bad title. The recovery "ageyne the aunsetrys of Rows" may have easily occurred, either through collusion, or by the right of entail not having then accrued to the plaintiff.]

To my right worshipful Sir and my right good nephew, John Paston, Esq. be this letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and my right good nephew, I recommend me unto you with all mine heart; please it you to understand the great necessity of my writing to you is this, that there was made an exchange by the grandsire of my husband Mundeford, on whose soul God have mercy! of the manor of Gressenhall with the ancestors of Rous for the manor of East Lexham, the which is part of my jointure, and my grandfather Mundeford recovered the said manor of East Lexham by assize¹ against the ancestors of Rous, and so made it clear; and now have Edmund Rous² claimed the said manor of East Lexham by the virtue of a tail (*an entail*) and hath taken possession, and made a feoffment to my Lord of Warwick,³ and Walter

Gorge,⁴ and to Curde;⁵ and on Friday before St. Valentine's day Walter Gorge and Curde entered and took possession for my said Lord of Warwick, and so both the foresaid manors were untailed; and at the same time of the exchange made, the tails and evidence of both (*the*) foresaid manors were delivered unto the parties indifferently by the advice of men learned; wherefore I beseech you that it please you to take the great labour upon you to inform my lord's good lordship of the truth in the form above written, and that it please you to understand whether that my lord will abide by the feoffment made to him or not, and that it shall please my lord that I may have right, as law require it; for I trust to God by such time as my lord shall be in-

¹ Assize is a writ directed to the sheriff of the county for recovery of the possession of things immovable, whereof yourself or ancestors have been dispossessed.

² Edmund Rous was second son of Henry Rous, Esq. of Dennington, in Suffolk, the ancestor of the present family, which had the title of Baronet conferred upon the head of it in 1660.

³ Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

⁴ Walter Gorges, Esq. married Mary, the daughter and heir of Sir William Oldhall, and was at this time lord of the manor of Oldhall in Great Fransham; he died in 1466. His son and heir, Sir Edmund Gorges, afterwards married a daughter of Sir John Howard, knight, the first Duke of Norfolk of that family.

⁵ John Curde was lord of the manor of Curde's Hall in Fransham.

formed of the truth by you, that his lordship will not support the foresaid Rous against my right; and if I had very understanding that my lord would take no part in the matter abovesaid, I would trust to God's mercy, and to you, and other of my good friends to have possession again in right hasty time, beseech-

, Norwich, Tuesday, February,
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.

ing you to pardon me of my simple writing, for (I) had no leisure. Right worshipful and my right good nephew I beseech the blessed Trinity have you in his gracious keeping. Written at Norwich in great haste the Tuesday next after St. Valentine's day.

Your own ELIZABETH MUNDEFORD.¹

*Don't & Bow Playworth
Elizabeth Mundeford*

LETTER CCIV.—(XXXII. vol. iv. p. 113.)

This letter contains a curious circumstance, it shows us a person petitioning for a place, and promising, if he should be successful, he would make the son of the person through whose interest he obtained it an annual present of five marks. May we not compare this transaction with those of modern times? John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, was appointed Lord Treasurer in 1462, which office he had also before held in the late king's reign. On the re-accession of Henry VI, he was taken prisoner, unjustly accused of cruelty, convicted, and in October 1470 beheaded.

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my right honourable master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise, and please it your good mastership to weet, that it is said here that my Lord Worcester is like to be treasurer, with whom I trust ye stand right well in conceit, with which God continue; wherefore I beseech your mastership that if my said lord have the said office, that it like you to desire the nomination of one of the offices, either of the Controuller or Searchership of Yarmouth, for a servant of yours; and I should so guide me in the office as I trust should be most profit to my said lord; and if your mastership liked to get grant thereof, that then it please you to licence one of your servants to take out the patent of the said office, and if it cost five, or six, or eight marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, or 4*l.*, or 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) I shall truly content it again; and yearly as long as I might have the offices, or any of them, I shall give my master your son five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) toward an hackney (a road horse).

It should be to me right a good mean to stand as well in the trust as in the conceit amongst merchants, with whom, and with all men, I call myself a servant of yours, and so will do if it please you, which boldeth (*emboldens*) me the more to call upon your worshipful mastership in this matter, wherein I beseech you to forgive me my boldness in this behalf. And if I knew that my lord should have the office in certain, then I would wait upon your good mastership there to obtain the patent, if it pleased your good mastership to get me the grant, &c.

No more unto you my right honourable master at this time, but Jesu I beseech send you a good conclusion in all your matters, and grant you ever your heart's desire.

Your continual servant and beadsman,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

¹ Elizabeth Mundeford was the widow of Osbert Mundeford, Esq., of Hockwold, in Norfolk, and was daughter of John Berney, Esq., by which means she was aunt to J. Paston.

LETTER CCV.—(XII. vol. i. p. 257.)

To my worshipful master, John Paston the oldest, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, I heartily recommend me unto your reverence, thanking you for the great cheer and comfortable words that ye gave unto me what time that I was last in your presence; desiring full specially of Almighty God, out of all your worldly tribulations and adversity gracious deliverance, and in all virtuous prosperity good increase and continuance. If it like your mastership to know the cause of this writing, it is this; it is not unknown¹ unto you that Master Brakle, Christ rest his soul! delivered to William Paston your brother, certain obligations, of the which the duty should grow to my convent in Norwich.

I have spoke to William Paston hereof, and he excuseth him, and saith on this wise; that by the will of Master Brakle, what time that Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, should be put unto his death, he delivered them unto his confessor; the which, as he saith, should be a Grey friar, whose name he knoweth not. Also, he saith, that after the death of the foresaid knight he spake with the friar, confessor unto the knight, and asked him after the foresaid obligations, and, as he saith, the

friar said unto him that he had delivered them unto *(the)* knight marshall.

Wherefore I beseech you, as specially as I may, that now while your brother is at London, that ye of your grace will know the truth in this matter, for the comfort of the dead and profit of my convent.

No more at this time, but that I beseech Almighty God in Trinity conserve yours, and keep you in all virtuous prosperity. Amen.

Written at Heylesdon in great haste, the 12th day of May, in your manor after meat.

The cause why the master delivered them to him more than to you, was, as he said unto me, forasmuch as ye had so many matters in hand for yourself, and also for the dead, that he durst not attempt you with all; and also because he had less for to do, his hope was that he should a sped *(have done)* to more readily.

Friar William Thorp dwells at Salisbury.

By your poor orator and beadsman,

Friar JOHN MOWTH.

Heylesdon, 12th of May, 1462.

2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVI.—(XIII. vol. i. p. 261.)

The first part of this letter relates to the disputes concerning Sir John Fastolf's estates, and shows that proceedings concerning property were often carried on in a clandestine manner. [Then as now each party taking all legal advantages of each other.]

To my right honourable and worshipful master, my Master Paston.

PLEASE it your worshipful mastership to weet, that it is informed me this day secretly, that there is directed out a commission to Master Yelverton² and master Jenney² which shall to-morrow sit by virtue of the same at Saint Olave's,³ and the substance of gentlemen and yeomen of Lotherland be assigned to be afore the said commissioners; and it is supposed it is for my master's lands, for as the

said person informed me, the said commissioners have been at Cotton, and there entered and holden a court; I cannot inform your mastership that it is thus in certain, but thus it was told me, and desired me to keep it secret; but because I conceive it is against your mastership, it is my part to give you relation thereof.

I send you a letter which cometh from Worcester⁴ to my master your brother, I would ye understood the intent of it, for as for Worcester I know well he is not good.

¹ [Fenn by mistake prints this *known*.]

² I suppose these were William Yelverton, a judge of the King's Bench, and William Jenney, a serjeant-at-law.

³ St. Olave's, a village in the hundred of Lothering, in Suffolk.

⁴ William Worcester, the secretary and servant of Sir John Fastolf, and one of his executors.

Some men are busy to make war, for by the absenting of my master, the parson cometh not of his own motion, but I would your mastership knew by whom it is moved. I heard you never call him false priest, by my truth, nor other language that is rehearsed (*to or by*) him, but God send a good accord, for of variance cometh great hurt often time; and I beseech Jesu send your mastership your heart's desire, and amend them that would the contrary.

Sir, yester even a man came from London, and he saith, the king came to London on

Saturday, and there did make a proclamation that all men that were between sixty and sixteen should be ready to wait upon him whensoever they were called; ¹and it is said, that my Lord Warwick had sent to the king, and informed his highness that the Lord Somerset ² had written to him to come to grace, but of the fleet of ships ³ there is no tidings in certain at London on Monday last past.

Your beadsman and servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVII.—(XIV. vol. i. p. 263.)

This appears to contain the report of the day relative to the transactions of the fleet which was sent out towards Britany in 1462, but which seems to have had no foundation, at least no material one, as our historians make no mention of such an engagement, nor does the writer himself give much credit to the report. It however authenticates the truth of a fleet having been sent out at that time.

To my right honourable and worshipful master, my master, John Paston.

PLEASE your worshipful mastership to weet, there is a ship of Hythe, which saith that John Cole came from the west coast on Wednesday last past; and he saith that the fleet of ships of this land met with sixty sail of Spaniards, Bretons, and Frenchmen, and there took of them fifty, whereof twelve ships were as great as the Grace de Dieu; and there is slain on this part the Lords Clinton and Dacre, ⁴ and many gentlemen, ⁵ juve and others, the number of four thousand, and the said Spaniards were purposed with merchandize into Flanders; my Lord of Warwick's ship, the Mary Grace, and the Trinity, had the greatest hurt, for they were foremost. God send grace this be true. On Thursday last past at London was no tidings in certain where the fleet was, nor what they had done, and therefore I fear the tidings the more.

¹ A similar proclamation is said to have been issued in 1464.

² This letter must have been written in 1462, as in that year the Duke of Somerset was generously pardoned; but revolting, was taken at the battle of Hexham, and beheaded.

³ This fleet was most probably that which our historians mention as being sent this year to Britanny and the Isle of Rhée, but of which the foreign historians say nothing.

⁴ John Lord Clinton, revolted from Henry VI. about 1459, and joined the Duke of York's party, on which account his lauds were confiscated and

Item, Sir, as for tidings at London, there were arrested by the treasurer forty sail lying in Thames, whereof many small ships; and it is said it is to carry men to Calais in all haste, for fear of the king of France for a siege; and it was told me secretly there were two hundred in Calais sworn contrary to the king's weal, and for default of their wages; and that Queen Margaret was ready at Boulogne with much silver to pay the soldiers in case they would give her entrance; many men be greatly afraid of this matter, and so the treasurer hath much to do for this cause.

Item, Sir, as for tidings out of Ireland, there were many men at London at the fair of the countries next them of Ireland, and they say, this three weeks came there neither ship nor boat out of Ireland to bring no tidings; and

himself attainted, but, on the accession of Edward IV., he was restored to his estates and honours, and soon after joined in commission with the Earl of Kent, Sir John Howard, &c., for the safe keeping of the seas, when, landing in Britanny with 10,000 men, they won Coquet with the Isle of Rhée. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Fynes, Lord Dacre, and died in 1464, aged about fifty-four years; the report therefore of his death here mentioned was certainly premature, as was that likewise of Lord Dacre.

⁵ This word is doubtful in the original. [It may be intended for juvenile.]

so it seemeth there is much to do there by the Earl of Pembroke;¹ and it is said, that the king should be at London as on Saturday or Sunday last past, and men deem that he would to Calais himself; for the soldiers are so wild there, that they will not let in any man but the king or my Lord Warwick; other tidings there were come to London, but they were not published; but John Welles

shall abide a day the longer to know what they are. No more unto you my right honourable master at this time, but Jesu send you your heart's desire, and amend them that would the contrary.

Your beadsman and continual servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVIII.—(XXXIII. vol. iv. p. 117.)

This letter was most probably written early in the reign of Edward IV., but in what year I cannot easily determine. The pardon of J. Paston here mentioned must have reference to the late change of the government, and the restlessness of the Scotch and Welsh alludes to the time when Queen Margaret was soliciting their assistance, I believe. The reflections here thrown upon the courage of Lord Scales are new, and I should think not well founded, as his character has ever been handed down to us as that of a nobleman highly distinguished for deeds of arms, not only against the enemies of his country, but in the gallant feats of chivalry; yet we have the authority of the king for the insinuation here thrown out by J. Paston. There was, however, at this time some disagreement between these spirited young men, which soon subsided; and my Lord Scales afterwards became his warm friend and advocate. We must, therefore, make some allowance for the asperity of the expressions here recorded, and consider them as the hasty words of a young man uttered in a moment of anger. Anthony Widville was summoned to parliament as Lord Scales in 1461, and by the death of his father in 1469 became Earl Rivers; this letter, therefore, must have been written between those years, if my former supposition should be wrong.

To Mistress Margaret Paston.

Most worshipful and my most special good mother, as humbly as I can I recommend me unto you, beseeching you of your blessing; please it you to understand that this day I spake with Batchelor Water, which let me have understanding of your welfare, whereof I thank God with all my heart; also he let me have knowledge that the Lord Scales had granted you to be my good lord, whereof I am nothing proud, for he may do least with the great master; but he would depart over the sea as hastily as he may, and because he weeneth that I would go with him, as I had promised him ever, and he had kept forth his journey at that time, this is the cause that he will be my good lord and help to get my pardon; the king is not best pleased with him for that he desireth to depart, inasmuch that the king hath said of him that whensoever he hath most to do, then the Lord Scales will surest ask leave to depart, and weeneth that it is most because of cowardice.

As for pardon, I can never get, without I should pay too much money for it, and I am not so purveyed.

As for Harry Hallman my brother will ask him no silver till ye be paid, therefore ye may send to him and have it.

Item, I am sorry that ye have fadyrd (*furthered*) my horse that was at Caister to be my brother Edmund's, for I had lever (*rather*) that they had him still than aught else; wherefore, though they proffer him you, from henceforth let not my brother Edmund take him, but let him say, whether they will let him have him or not, that I have promised my brother Edmund a better horse for him, so that he will not claim the same for his.

As for tidings, here be none but that the Scots and Welsh men be busy, what they mean I cannot say, my cousin John Loveday can tell you and there be any other flying tales, for he hath walked in London and so do not I; when I may I will come home with God's grace, whom I beseech to send you your heart's desire. Written the 5th day of July.

By your humblest son and servant,

JOHN PASTON,

5 July,

between 1461 and 1469.

1 and 9 E. IV.

¹ Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, was in Ireland, endeavouring to procure assistance for the deposed King Henry, his half-brother.

LETTER CCIX.—(XXXIV. vol. iv. p. 121.)

The date of this letter cannot be exactly ascertained; it must have been written after the preceding one, as J. Russe seems now to be in office at Yarmouth. He speaks freely of Chapman, and as freely tells J. Paston of the common voice against him. I have given this letter for the strictures it contains on the character of J. Paston, and to show the anxiety of the writer of it for the good of his master. Master Fenn, here mentioned, appears to have been a lawyer of eminence, and was a person in great confidence with J. Paston, &c., as may be collected from several of the letters in this collection. [The assertion of Chapman being of no reputation, and disposed to bribery, does not proceed with a very good grace from one who has promised "v mark toward an hackney" for the son of his patron, on himself being appointed to the office. Chapman's offence was most likely his labouring "to supplant me;" and John Russe therefore ingeniously strives to make Paston's support of himself the more earnest, by endeavouring to irritate him against Chapman by repeating his gossiping scandal.]

To the right worshipful my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and my right honourable master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise; and please your mastership to weet, that here is one Thomas Chapman, an evil-disposed man alway against you, as I have informed your mastership many times, and now he hath laboured to my Lord Treasurer to supplant me, and brought down writing from the king and my Lord Treasurer; but, ere his writing came, Wydeville found the means, by the supportation of Master Fenn, that we had a discharge for him out of the Chancery; wherefore the said Chapman proposeth to be at London in all haste, and to advertise the king and my Lord Treasurer against me, to the greatest hurt he can imagine: wherefore I beseech your mastership, considering his evil disposition to you, and also the rather at my poor instance, that ye like that my Lord Treasurer might understand that the said Chapman is of no reputation, but evil disposed to bribery of strangers, and by colour of his office of supervisor of the search shall greatly hurt the port; the said Chapman's supporters is Blakeney, clerk of the signet, and Avery Cornburgh, yeoman of the king's chamber; he hath here of Avery's twenty-four tuns wine, whereof at the long way he shall make the said Avery a lewd (*bad*) reckoning; the said Chapman loveth not you, nor no man to you ward, &c.

Sir, I pray God bring you once to reign among your countrymen in love, and to be dreaded; the longer ye continue there the

more hurt groweth to you; men say ye will neither follow the advice of your own kindred, nor of your counsel, but continue¹ your own wilfulness, which, but grace be, shall be your destruction.

It is my part to inform your mastership as the common voice is: God better it, and grant you once heart's ease; for it is half a death to me to hear the general voice of the people, which daily increaseth, &c.

Sir, I beseech your mastership to remember my mistress for the little silver, which, for certain things delivered to your use, is due to me: I have need of it now; I have bought salt and other things, which hath brought me out of much silver: I would trust and (*if*) I needed to borrow twenty pounds, your mastership would ease me for a time, but this that I desire is mine own duty. And Jesu grant you ever your heart's desire to your worship and profit, and preserve you my right honourable master from all adversity.

Written at Yarmouth, the 15th day of July. Here is a carvel of Caen, in Normandy, and he taketh Dutchmen, and ransometh them grievously.

Your servant and beadsman,
JOHN RUSSE.

Yarmouth, 15th July,
1462, or 1463.
2 or 3 E. IV.

¹ [Fenn prints "but *only* your own wilfulness, and which," &c. The original is as in the text.]

LETTER CCX.—(XXXV. vol. iv. p. 125.)

This letter is given as mentioning the death of one of the writers of letters in this collection, and as containing an historical fact relative to an embassy into Scotland, consisting of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, John Lord Wenlock, Laurence Booth, Bishop of Durham, &c. For the time of Christopher's death see Letter ccxii. p. 166.

To my right good master, John Paston the oldest, being at Heylesdon, beside Norwich, in haste.

PLEASE your mastership weet, that Christopher Hanson is dead and buried, and as for executor or testament he made none.

As for tidings the Earls of Warwick, of Essex, Lord Wenlock, Bishop of Durham, and other, go into Scotland of inbassat (*in embassy*).

And as for the siege of Calais we hear no more thereof, beseech be God, who have you in his keeping.

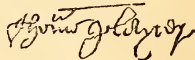
Item, as for Christopher's papers that

longeth to your tenants, I have gotten (*them*) of William Worcester, and as for all the remanent of Christopher's goods William Worcester hath the rule as him seemeth most convenient.

Your

THOMAS PLAYTERS.

After July, 1462.
2 E. IV.



LETTER CCXI.—(XV. vol. i. p. 267.)

John Paston appears, according to the commendable custom of those times, to have been brought up in the family of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and at this time, when he was scarcely twenty years of age, to have been an attendant upon him at his castle of Holt, in Denbighshire.

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you lowly of your blessing. Please it you to have knowledge that my lord is purposed to send for my lady,¹ and is like to keep his Christmas here in Wales; for the king hath desired him to do the same, wherefore I beseech you that (*you*) would vouchsafe to send me some money by the bearer hereof; for in good faith, as it is not unknown to you, that I had but two nobles² in my purse, which that Richard Calle took (*delivered*) me by your commandment when I departed from you out of Norwich.

The bearer hereof should buy me a gown with part of the money, if it please you to deliver him as much money as he may buy it with; for I have but one gown at Framlingham, and another here, and that is my livery gown,³ and we must wear them

every day for the more part, and one gown without change will soon be done.

As for tidings, my Lord of Warwick yed (*went*) forwards into Scotland, as on Saturday last past with twenty thousand men, and Sir William Tunstall is taken with the garrison of Bamborough⁴ and is like to be beaded, and by the means of Sir Richard Tunstall⁵ his own brother.

As soon as I hear any more tidings, I shall send them you by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping. Written in haste at the castle of the Holt, upon Hallowmass day.

Your son and lowly servant,
J. PASTON, *jun.*

Holt, 1st of November, 1462.
2 E. IV.

attending upon the great men were generally obliged to appear dressed in their livery gowns.

⁴ Bamborough Castle, in Northumberland, was taken by Queen Margaret, and garrisoned with Scots.

⁵ Sir William Tunstall was taken in the garrison on King Edward's part, whilst his brother, Sir Richard, was in the army of Queen Margaret.

¹ Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk, was daughter of John Talbot, the first Earl of Shrewsbury.

² A noble is 6s. 8d.

³ We learn from hence that the young gentlemen

LETTER CCXII.—(XVI. vol. i. p. 271.)

The facts mentioned in this letter are curious, as well those relative to the queen and lords, as those concerning Earl Douglas; and must have happened in 1462, or in the beginning of 1463.

To my master, John Paston, at Heylesdon.

ITEM, please you weet of other tidings; these lords in your other letter, with Lord Hastings and others, *(have)* been to Carlisle to receive in the Queen of Scots.¹ And upon this appointment Earl Douglas² is commanded to come thence, and as a sorrowful and a sore rebuked man lieth in the Abbey of Saint Alban; and by the said appointment shall not be reputed nor taken but as an Englishman, and if he come in the danger of Scots they to slay him. Item, King Harry and his adherents in Scotland shall be delivered; and Lord Dacre of the north is won and yielded, and the said lord, Sir Richard Tunstall, and one Byllingham in the said castle be taken and headed. Item,

the queen and prince have been in France and have made much ways and great *(number of)* people to come to Scotland and there trust to have succour, and thence to come into England. What shall fall I cannot say, but I heard that these appointments were taken by the young lords of Scotland, but not by the old.

Your

PLAINTERS.

Christopher died on the Saturday next before Saint Margaret (20th July), in the 2d year of Edward IV.

After the 20th July, 1 I believe in 1463.
1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CCXIII.—(XXXVI. vol. iv. p. 127.)

This letter, dated from Stamford (either in Northumberland or Yorkshire), appears to have been written in March 1462-3, when the king had an army in the north to act against the Scots, who had made several attempts in favour of Henry and Margaret. The letter is written in an easy and dutiful style, and the request in it seems reasonable from a young man attending his royal master in the field. In the year 1463 Easter Sunday fell upon the 10th of April, which gave a sufficient time for his father to have money ready for him according to his request. He subscribes himself the older, to distinguish himself from his younger brother John Paston. (It was not uncommon at this period, though it must have been inconvenient, to have, as in this instance, brothers or sisters with the same baptismal names.)

To mine right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, being in the Inner Temple.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you of your blessing and good fatherhood. Please it you to understand the great expense that I have daily travelling with the

king, as the bearer hereof can inform you, and how long that I am like to tarry here in this country ere I may speak with you again, and how I am charged to have mine horse and harness ready, and in hasty wise, beseeching you to consider these causes, and so to remember me that I may have such things as I may do my master service with, and pleasure, trusting in God it shall be to your worship and to mine avail; in especial I beseech you, that I may be sure where to have money somewhat before Easter, either of you or by mine uncle Clement, when need

¹ Mary, daughter to Arnold, Duke of Guelders, was married to James II., king of Scotland, in 1448, and died in 1463.

² James Earl of Douglas was banished his own country, and being received by Edward in England with honour and respect was by him made a Knight of the Garter. In 1483 he was taken prisoner by the Scots, and detained a prisoner till his death, in 1488. He is said to have entered into holy orders.

of other causes the bearer hereof can inform you. No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Stamford,
Sunday, 13th of March, 1462-3. 3 E. IV.

Written at Stamford, the 13th day of March.
By your older son,
JOHN PASTON.

*By your older son
John Paston*

LETTER CCXIV.—(XXXVII. vol. iv. p. 129.)

This letter contains nothing by which we can exactly fix the date, though it must have been written between 1462 and 1465, as it appears from it that J. Paston's son had been knighted. The hint of him and his son being out of the king's good grace would fix it about 1465, as in 1466 J. Paston was committed to the Fleet, and died the same year. The exact date, however, is immaterial, the character of the father being the object of the reader's notice. [The writer is not known.]

To my worshipful master, Master Paston, the eldest.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto your mastership, and of one matter at reverence of God take heed, for in truth I hear much talking thereof, and that is both in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Norwich among all men of worship, as well that love you as others, and that is of my master, your son Sir John,¹ because he is so at home, and none other wise set for (*provided for*). Some say that ye and he both stand out of the king's good grace, and some say that ye keep him at home for negardchepe (*niggardship, covetousness*), and will no thing ware (*spend*) upon him, and so each man say his advice as it please him to talk; and I have inquired, and said the most cause is in part for cause ye

are so much out, that he is the rather at home for the safeguard of the coasts. But at the reverence of God eschewing of common language, see that he may worshipfully be set for either in the king's service or in marriage; for as for touching the Lady Chamberlayne² that matter is done for, I spake with the parson thereof, and I heard by him that that matter will not pre. (*q. will not succeed.*)

No more, but God speed you as well in all matters as I would ye should do, I beseech you that this letter be kept secret.

By your beadsman, R. C. V. C.

Between 1462 and 1465.
2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXV.—(XXXVIII. vol. iv. p. 131.)

We have here the whole process of a writ of fieri facias, and the subtrefuges used by the defendants to defeat its effect, which they seem to have understood as well formerly as in these days of modern refinements and vexatious proceedings. [Master Hugh Fenn appears not to have been quite so true and trusty a friend as he has been represented in some of the preceding letters.]

To my right worshipful mistress, my mistress, Margaret Paston, at Caister.

PLEASE it your good mistressship to weet, that a fieri facias³ is come out of the Exche-

quer for Hugh Fenn to the sheriff of Norfolk to make levy of two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*)

¹ It appears from this letter that Sir John Paston was knighted in the life-time of his father.

² This Lady Chamberlayne was Anne, daughter and sole heir of Sir Robert Herling, knight, by Jane, daughter and heir of John Gonville, Esq. She married to her first husband Sir William Chamberlayne, Knight of the Garter, a renowned and valiant soldier, who died in 1462. She was at this time his widow, and inherited from her father a very considerable fortune. She afterwards married Sir Robert

Wingfield, and after his decease she became the wife of John Lord Scrope of Bolton. By the name of Lady Scrope she founded and endowed a fellowship in the college of Gonville and Caius at Cambridge, originally founded by an ancestor of her ladyship's. She was born in 1426, and was alive in 1502. At the time this letter was writing she must have been nearly forty years old, when Sir John Paston could not have been much above twenty.

³ Fieri facias is a writ judicial, that lies (at all times

of the proper goods and chattels of my master, as executor of Sir John Fastolf, of which fieri facias we sent my master word, which sent us word again by Berney that we should let the sheriff understand that my master never took upon him as executor, and so for that cause that writ was no warrant to take my master's goods; and also that my master made a deed of gift of all his goods and chattels to Master Prowet and Clement Paston and others, so that my master hath no goods whereof he should make levy of the foresaid sum; and if the sheriff would not take this for none answer, that then my master would he should be letted (*hindered*) in Master Prowet's and Clement Paston's names; nevertheless we spake with the sheriff this day, and let him understand the causes aforesaid, and he agreed, so that he might have surety to save him harmless, to make such return as my master of his counsel could devise,¹ and because my master wrote by Berney that he would not find the sheriff no surety, we would not appoint with him in that wise; and so we took advice of Thomas Green, and

because the under-sheriff shall be on Monday at (*Potter*) Heigham, by Bastwick Bridge end, he and we thought that it was best that Master Prowet should meet with the sheriff there, and require and charge him that by colour of the foresaid fieri facias that he make no levy of any goods and chattels of the said Prowet's and Clement Paston's against the said John Paston's, letting him weet that such goods, as the said Paston had, be now the said Prowet's and Clement Paston's by virtue of a deed of gift made to them almost two years ago; and if the sheriff will be busy after that to take any chattel, that he be letted in Master Prowet's name and Clement Paston's by Daubeney and others; which business of the sheriff shall be on Tuesday or Wednesday, and, as we understand, at Heylesdon; wherefore ye must send thither Daubeney with Peacock, and they may get them there more fellowship by the advice of master Sir John Paston.

JAMES GRESHAM.

Written
between 1462 and 1465. 2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVI.—(XXXIX. vol. iv. p. 135.)

[The proceeding respecting Hall, "claimed for a bondman," is curious, and in a case where the damages were so large, the details we have no doubt would have been still more interesting; but were probably too well known to have been given in a familiar letter of the time. Villenage was nearly extinct at this time, but letters of enfranchisement were granted by Elizabeth, and villenage was pleaded, though unsuccessfully, as late as the reign of James I. See 'Hallam's Middle Ages,' vol. iii.]

Unto my mistress, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful mistress, I recommend me unto your good mistress-ship; please it you to weet that my master your husband, my mistress your mother, my master Sir John, Master William, Master Clement, and all their men were in good health when this letter was written, thanked be Jesu, and also their matters be in a good way, for my Lord Chancellor² is their singular good lord in this matter at this time, and that it proveth so

within the year and day, for him that hath recovered in an action of debt or damages) to the sheriff, to command him to levy the debt or damages of his goods against whom the recovery was had.

¹ [Penn has, by mistake, *desire*.]

² George Neville, Bishop of Exeter (or Archbishop of York), was Lord Chancellor at this time.

he was yesterday in the Exchequer, and there he had afore him all the judges, all the barons of the Exchequer, and all the serjeants, and there argued wher (*whether*) that the barons of the Exchequer should award any such commission³ or not, and upon that the said commission shall be brought upon Friday into the Chancery, and there to be proved whether it be lawful or not, &c.

Item, and if it please you to give Daveney⁴ knowledge that there is judgment given upon the condemnation against Hall, that he claimed for his bondman, and the judgment

³ We do not learn what this commission related to.

⁴ [Query if this name is not intended for Daubeney.]

is given against Daveney, Richard Calle, and Thomas Bon, and there is coming out process for to take their bodies this same day, and if they or any of them be taken they shall never go out of prison unto the time that they have satisfied the party of eight score marks¹ (106*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*.) and therefore let them beware,

&c. The Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at London, upon Thursday next after the purification of Our Lady, &c.

By your servant,

JOHN WYKES.

Thursday, February,
between 1462 and 1465. 2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVII.—(XL. vol. iv. p. 139.)

I have given this letter for two reasons; the first, as it shows the ease with which the familiar conversation between the persons here mentioned is reduced to writing, and the second, as it throws some light upon the means used for manning and victualling such ships as then composed the navy of England.

To my most reverend and worshipful master, John Paston, dwelling at Heylesdon, be this delivered.

THS

MOST reverend and worshipful master, I commend me unto your good mastership; please you to have knowledge, on the Friday at afternoon next after Saint Peter, there was at the tavern in London old Debenham and young Debenham, Thomas Edmonds and I; and there the said Thomas Edmonds fell in communication with old Debenham, and said that my Lord Treasurer,² had put him to a great charge [*office*] for the victualling of (*the*) Mary Talbot,³ saying to old Debenham that he heard say that he had a hundred bullocks to sell, the which the said Edmonds will buy so that they may accord of the price: then the said old Debenham answered again and said he would, so that he might have good payment, or else the said Edmonds to be bound in an obligation to pay him at such days as they might accord; anon, upon this same language, young Debenham spake to his father, "Sir, I pray you that ye will take avisement of this matter till to-morrow, for I trust to your good fatherhood that ye will let me have a serteyn (*a certain number*) of your bullocks for the victualling of the barge of Yarmouth, and I shall find you sufficient surety for the payment thereof; for Edmonds,

I will that ye know I have been there, and spoke with the owner and with the master of the said barge, and they know my appointment."

Then the said Edmonds answered to young Debenham, and told him that the city of Norwich and Yarmouth hath granted, and sent writing to the king and to the lords, that they will man and victual the said barge of their own costs from the time of her going out till her coming home; and thus the said Edmonds told him that my Lord Treasurer and all the lords that be at London think they do right well their devoir (*duty*), and be worthy much thank of the king: "Well," quoth young Debenham, "I had in commandment for to have the rule of the said barge, and I will be at Yarmouth ere this day four days, and man her and bring her down to the Gyls [*Giles*] of Hull, for that is my ship."

Also, he said more, without that he might have the said barge, he will not go to sea but himself and his twenty-four men, and thus, if please your mastership, he departed from the tavern; and at his departing he told the said Thomas Edmonds, "this is Paston's labour;" then the said Edmonds answered him again, and said plainly he was to blame for to report so of your mastership, for he knoweth verily he said untruly of you and of my master your son both, and thereon he would take an oath; and so, if it please your good mastership, let the city of Norwich and Yarmouth have knowledge of his great cracking and boasts, and let (*hinder*) him of his purpose by the authority that they have.

Item, my master your son will have to his

¹ The costs on this process in favour of the bondman appear large.

² John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester; he was beheaded in October 1470.

³ The Mary Talbot,—it appears as if this ship received her name from the Blessed Virgin, who most probably had been implored to protect her, and from the valiant Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who had so courageously fought in the French wars: this is merely a conjecture, and perhaps an ill-founded one.

jackets, murrey¹ and tawney, and that it please you some of my fellowship may speak to one of the drapers for to ordain it against his coming home, for I trow it shall be this day sevn'ight ere he cometh home.

Item, Sir, if please you Scrope hath sent to you to London by Bingham for the money that ye know of; yet I spake not with him, but I shall tell him that I suppose ye will be here in the last end of the term, and I shall send your mastership word what answer I have of him.

Item, Sir, if please, such tidings as I hear of I send you word, my Lord of Warwick hath

been in Scotland² and taken a castle of the Scots, and upon this there came the Queen of Scots³ with other lords of her country, as ye shall hear the names, in basetry (*in embassy*) to my said Lord of Warwick, and a truce is taken betwixt this and Saint Bartholomew's day in August: these is the last tidings that I know. No more to your good mastership at this time, but Jesu have (*you*) in keeping. Written on the Saturday next after Saint Peter.

By your poor servant,

J. DAUBENEY.

Saint Peter,

Saturday, 2d of July, 1463. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVIII—(XLI. vol. iv. p. 145.)

We have in this letter a further account of the proceedings relative to the commanding, manning and victualling of the barge of Yarmouth, and the means made use of to procure the different stores to fit her for her voyage, &c.

To my master John Paston, the younger, be this delivered.

SIR, I have received your letter, wherein I understand that my master desired that my master your brother might have the guiding and governance of the barge of Yarmouth; as to that, and (*if*) men of Yarmouth had known my master's intent a fortnight ago he had been sure of it, but now it is so that Debenham hath a commission of the king, expressed only for that ship named in his commission, and he hath been here at Yarmouth, and spoken with the bailiffs and with the owners of the said ship, and taken such a direction that they may grant it no man but him; and moreover he hath indented with the owners of the ship what day it shall be ready as well victualled as manned; and also he hath brought down letters from my Lord Treasurer to all persons,⁴

and gentlemen in this country to help him and assist him to victual and man the said ship, and his men is here daily, and goeth about and gathereth wheat, malt, money, and whatsoever any man will give, &c.

The blessed Trinity preserve you. Written at Caister, the Friday next after I received your letter.

Item, it is talked here that my master your brother and Debenham were at words at London, and that Debenham should have stricken him had not Howard a been (*have been*), &c. whereof I am right sorry, &c. nevertheless I trust to God all shall be well.

Your servant, RICHARD CALLE.

Caister, Friday,

July 1463. 3 E. IV.

¹ Dark red or purple, and yellowish colour.

² This relates to the transactions in the north during the year 1463, when the Earl of Warwick commanded there after Edward's return to London, who was now attentive to the designs of France respecting Henry and Margaret.

³ Mary, daughter of Arnold, Duke of Gueldres, and mother to James III. king of Scotland. She was a woman of heroic valour, and took an active part in the government with the regents during the minority of her son. She died during this year.

⁴ In original, p'öss. Feun translates it *priors*.]

LETTER CCXIX.—(XLII. vol. iv. p. 147.)

We see in this letter the hold which the clergy had on the laity for any omissions in payment of what was due to the church; the danger of Sir John Paston's soul is gently touched upon, and the fears for the peace of that of Sir John Fastolf is ingeniously introduced. From the account in this letter the arrears were of so considerable standing that Sir John Paston's memory seemed to want a little refreshing, and the *bringer* of this letter appears to have received his instructions accordingly. The Abbey of Langley was founded in the time of Richard I. about the year 1198. Nicholas occurs abbot in 1428 and 1463, and Nicholas Wamerton in 1467 and 1474; it was most probably the first Nicholas who was the writer of this letter, as Wamerton can scarcely be supposed to have been the abbot so early as 1428, unless he lived to a very old age. [But he might have become abbot in 1463.]

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, knight, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and tenderly beloved in our Lord God, I commend me to you, sending you knowing (*knowledge*) that I did your errand to my brother the parson of Blofield on Wednesday was se'nnight, after the understanding that I had of you and from you by this bringer, which man I felt right well and favourably disposed to you ward, and more favourably will be than to any other gentleman living, the will of the dead performed, and his conscience saved; and more things said favourably for you, which I entitiled in a scroll to have certified to your servant Calle, if he had come as ye sent me word he should have done, and should as ye behested [*appointed*]¹ me, have brought me our farm for Heylesdon, which not done causeth me to write, praying your gentleness that I send no more therefore, for it is unpaid for the year afore the Hallowmass that my

master Falstolf died, and for the same year that he died in, and since for two years, and five shillings unpaid of a year, and come Michaelmas next shall be another year unpaid, thus is four years unpaid and five shillings, and at Michaelmas next shall be five years and five shillings.

This thus kept from holy church, that is, holy church's good, may not be without great peril of soul; where the peril is God knoweth. I pray God amend it, and give them grace that have his goods so to dispose them, that they and the dead both may be out of peril, and the Trinity have you in his merciful keeping. Written at Langley, on Sunday at even late, next after Saint John's day (*the*) decollation, (*29th of August*).

By your well-will and [willer],

ABBOT OF LANGLEY.

Langley, Sunday,
4th of September, 1463.
3 E. IV.

*2 Be you we lewy lland
Abbot of Langley*

LETTER CCXX.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 273.)

We have in this letter a most accurate and interesting account of the noblemen and others, employed in the sieges of three castles on the eastern shore of the county of Northumberland, taken by Queen Margaret, and now in the possession of the adherents and friends of Henry VI. We are informed whence they received their victuals and ordnance, and of the soldier-like care and attention of the Earl of Warwick, who commanded the forces of King Edward. We may here observe that though the troops were hired for a certain time, yet though that time was expired, they durst not leave the camp and return home; for if they did even get away by stealth, yet if discovered and taken they would be severely punished. Others who had not obeyed the king's orders, and attended him in person, would likewise suffer severely, unless they made proper excuses for their absence; and the writer of this letter kindly offers his services, from his connexion with men of consequence about the king, to have their excuses admitted. We here also see who were most in the royal favour. These sieges were undertaken, our historians say, soon after the battle of Hexham, which was

¹ [Fenn translates—*promised*.]

fought and won on the 15th of May, 1463, by King Edward, but according to this account they were not undertaken till near eight months after. The castles of Bam borough and Dunstanborough were soon taken; but that of Alnwick, being relieved by the Scots, the garrison marched out, probably by treaty.

To my right worshipful brother, John Paston, the elder son of John Paston, Esq., be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful brother I recommend me to you; please it you to weet, that as this day we had tidings here¹ that the Scots will come into England within seven days after the writing of this letter, for to rescue these three castles, Alnwick, Dunstanborough, and Bam borough, which castles were besieged as on yesterday; and at the siege of Alnwick lieth my Lord of Kent² and the Lord Scales, and at Dunstanborough castle lieth the Earl of Worcester and Sir Ralph Grey, and at the castle of Bam borough lieth the Lord Montague and the Lord Ogle, and other divers lords and gentlemen that I know not; and there is to them out of Newcastle ordnance I know, both for the sieges and for the field, in case that there be any field taken, as I trow there shall none be not yet, for the Scots keep no promise. My Lord of Warwick lieth at the castle of Warkworth, but three miles out of Alnwick, and he rideth daily to all these castles for to oversee the sieges; and if they want victuals, or any other thing, he is ready for to purvey it for them to his power. The king commanded my Lord of Norfolk for to conduct victuals and the ordnance out of Newcastle unto Warkworth castle, to my Lord of Warwick; and so my Lord of Norfolk commanded Sir John Howard,³ Sir William Peche, Sir Robert Chamberlayne, Ralph Asheton, and me, Calthorp, and Gorge, and others, for to go forth with the victuals and ordnance unto my Lord of Warwick, and so we were with my Lord of Warwick with the victuals and ordnance as yesterday.

The king lieth at Durham, and my Lord of Norfolk at Newcastle; we have people enough here. In case we abide here, I pray you purvey that I may have here more money by Christmas eve at the farthest, for I may get leave for to send none of my waged men home again; no man can get no leave for to

go home but if they steal away, and if they might be known they shall be sharply punished. Make as merry as ye can, for there is no jeopardy towards not yet, and there be any jeopardy I shall soon send you word by the grace of God. I wot well ye have more tidings than we have here, but these be true tidings.

Yelverton and Jenney are like for to be greatly punished, for because they came not hither to the king; they are morkyn (*marked*) well I know, and so is John Byllingforth and Thomas Playters, wherefore I am right sorry. I pray you let them have weeting thereof, that they may purvey their excuse in haste, so that the king may have knowledge why that they came not to him in their own persons. Let them come, or send their excuse to me in writing, and I shall purvey that the king shall have knowledge of their excuse; for I am well acquainted with my Lord Hastings,⁴ and my Lord Dacres,⁵ which be now greatest about the king's person; and also I am well acquainted with the younger Mortymer, Ferrers, Hawte, Harpur, Crowmer, and Bosewell, of the king's house.

I pray you let my grandam and my cousin Clere have knowledge how that I desired you to let them have knowledge of the tidings in this letter, for I promised for to send them tidings. I pray you let my mother have knowledge how that I, and my fellowship, and your servants, are at the writing of this letter in good hell (*health*), blessed be God.

I pray you let my father have knowledge of this letter, and of the other letter that I sent to my mother by Felbrigg's man; and how that I pray both him and my mother lowly of their blessings.

I pray you that you will send me some letter how ye do, and of your tidings with you, for I think long that I hear no word from my mother and you.

I pray you that this bill may recommend

¹ [Fenn in error prints *how*.]

² William Neville, Lord Falconbridge, now Earl of Kent.

³ Sir John Howard, afterwards the first Duke of Norfolk of that name.

⁴ William Lord Hastings, beheaded in 1483.

⁵ Richard Fines, Lord Dacre.

me to my sister Margery, and to my Mistress Joan Gayne (*Jenney*), and to all good masters and fellows within Caister.

I sent no letter to my father never since I departed from you, for I could get no man to London, and never since.

I pray you in case ye speak with my cousin

Newcastle, Saturday,
10th of December, 1463.
3 E. IV.

Margaret Clere, recommend me to her; and Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Newcastle on Saturday next after the Conception of our Lady.

YOUR

JOHN PASTON, *the youngest.*

I pray you let Richard Calle see this letter.

John Paston the youngest

LETTER CCXXI.—(XLIII. vol. iv. p. 151.)

It appears from this letter, which contains many curious particulars, that the king interested himself in the election for the county of Norfolk, in behalf of those candidates who were recommended by the Duke of Suffolk. This parliament was summoned to meet in January 1463-4, and it appears that Paston, Berney, and Heydon, were the candidates, though Paston did not intend to be present, as his wife was to give him the earliest intelligence of what passed.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please you to weet that I received a letter from you on the Sunday next after Twelfth day, which was sent by a priest of St. Gregory's parish of Norwich; and whereas ye marvelled I sent you no writings of such letters as ye sent me before, I sent you an answer of the substance of such matters as ye have written of to me before (by Playters), the which he told me a [*he*] sent them to you to London. And as touching the errands that ye sent to me for to do to Richard Calle, I have done as ye commanded me to do, and called upon him, therefore, both before your writing and sithen (*since*); he therefore have none excuse for default of leisure, for he hath been but right little here since ye departed hence; he is out at this time, and when that he cometh home I shall make him make you a clear bill of the receipt of your livelihood, and Fastolf's both; and I shall send you a clear bill of my receipts, and also of my payments out thereof again; and as for such errands that should be done to Sir Thomas Howes, I have showed Richard Calle your writing, and told him your intent, as for such things as ye would he should say to him on his own head. Also I have done your errands to my mother and to my cousin Clere after your writing. Item,

I have spoken to John Adam and to Playters of your intent of the last bill that ye sent me, and they say they will do after your intent as much as they may, and ye shall have an answer thereof in haste.

Item, Sir Robert Conyers dined with me this day, and showed me a letter that came from the king to him, desiring him that he should await upon his well-beloved brother the Duke of Suffolk, at Norwich, on Monday next coming, for to be at the election of knights of the shire; and he told me that every gentlemen of Norfolk and Suffolk that are of any reputation hath writing from the king in likewise as he had. I feel him by his saying, that he is right well disposed to you ward; he saith there shall no man make him to be against you in no matter. Skipwith shall tell you such tidings as beeth in this country, and of Thomas Gorney¹ and of

¹ There was at this time a Thomas Gurney, Esq., of Norwich, who had married Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Jernegan, of Somerleyton, and who died in 1471, but it does not appear to have been him that is here mentioned. The following extract from one of these old letters from Thomas Playters to John Paston, Esq., explains the crime committed by this person and his servant (Jan. 1463-4. 3 E. IV.).

"Please yo^r maistrship wete, that as for my Lord of Norwich cosyn's deth, Thomas Gurnay's man hath confessed that he slewe hym by comãundmēt of his

his man; himself is clerk convict, and his man is hanged; ye shall hear hereafter what they and others were purposed to have done to their master.

I thank you heartily of your writing to me before that John Paston came home, for God knoweth I thought right long till I heard from you; I shall send word in writing of such tidings as we have here on Monday in haste. Dawbeney desireth to weet what time that it please you that he should come again to you.

My mother and many other folks maketh much of your son John, the elder, and (are) right glad of his coming home, and liketh right well his demeaning. Heydon's son¹ hath borne out the side stoutly here this Christmas, and when that he rideth he hath four or five men with him in a clothing [livery]; but he hath but little favour in this country but if (unless) it be of the bishop² and of the prior of Norwich;³ the said prior hath granted him

the stewardship that his father had....he hath it under the convent seal, and Spilman⁴ (is) his tutor to learn him how he should be demeaned therein. It is said about Bacons-thorp that Harry Heydon should have said that it were well done that men of the country should make ready their bald batts⁵ and their clouted shoen⁶ (shoes) and go fetch home their knights of shire.....Berney; and it is promised him that he shall be met withal because of his language. *Pray God send us a good world and a peaceable.* I shall purvey for all things that ye have sent to me for, so that I ween ye shall be pleased. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday next before Saint Agnes.

Your

MARGARET PASTON.⁷

Norwich,
Wednesday, 18th January,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXII.—(XLIV. vol. iv. p. 157.)

The king at this time was using every means to make himself popular, and for that purpose intended visiting different parts of the kingdom.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Caister, in Norfolk.

AFTER due recommendation had, please it your mastership to weet that this day the plea between Ogan and you was sore (much) argued in the King's Bench by your counsel in letting [resisting] of the judgment, and tomorrow have they day to argue again. And for lack of copies of the plea I am fain to sue

for new copies thereof for your counsel; your counsel hopeth to do well therein; these argued for you, Greenfield, Catesby, Pygot, Nottingham, and Starky, &c.;⁸ and yesterday was the matter between Debenham and you called by Jenney⁹ for an answer. I have spoken unto Catesby, and delivered him your

maistr, and confessed ovr, that y^e same dager he slewe hym wyth he kest (cast) it in a sege, whiche is founden and taken up al to howyd (bent together), for he cowde not breke it, and in p^{er}son is bothe he and his maistr.² The same letter then goes on, and says, "Also on Thursday next afr. Cristemasse was a man slayn by whom no man woot, nor what he is that was slayn, no man knowe, his face is so mangled." ["Clerk convict" means that he had been convicted, but had claimed benefit of clergy as being able to read; the master's life was thus spared and the man was hung.]

¹ This must be Henry, son of John Heydon, Esq., recorder of Norwich.

² Walter Lybert [or Hart], bishop from 1445 to 1472.

³ John Molet or Mowth, prior from 1453 to 1471.

⁴ Henry Spilman, afterwards recorder of Norwich; he was the founder of the Spilmans of Narborough,

by marrying Ela, daughter and heir of William de Narborough.

⁵ Bald batts seem to mean here ball batts, or batts to play at ball with.

⁶ Clot shoen, clouted shoes—shoes shod with thin plates of iron.

⁷ A part of the original letter is torn off, which makes it defective in two or three sentences [these have been supplied in some cases by Fenn by the words in *italic*].

⁸ I have given this letter as containing several law matters, and the names of many eminent lawyers. John Greenfield, John Catesby, and Richard Pygot, were made sergeants in November, 1464. Catesby afterwards became a judge in 1482. In 1480 William Nottingham was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and in 1484 was succeeded by Sir Humphrey Starkey.

⁹ William Jenney was made a sergeant in 1464, and a justice of the King's Bench in 1478.

information, and to be advised, and to commune with Master Greenfield, &c.

The two chief judges¹ and master Lyttelton² are awaiting upon the king, for the king is purposed into Gloucestershire, &c.

It is said that my Lord Chancellor³ shall be here on Saturday or on Monday next coming, as the masters of the Chancery say. I write to you this because ye said to me if ye wist that my Lord Chancellor should be here, then would ye come hither, and else would ye not come here this term.

As touching Rysing he hath his day, utas purificationis (9th February), but I have that way that his presence is reconдите for all this term.

Master Clement⁴ telleth me that Worcester hath put exception unto your witness,⁵ &c.

It is said that the king would ride (*into*) Sussex, Kent, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, and so to the parliament, for he hath sent for all his feedmen to await upon him in their best array in all haste.

Written at London, the Thursday in the morrow after Saint Paul.

Your own poor man,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London,

Thursday, 26th of January,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXIII.—(XVIII. vol. i. p. 279.)

This curious letter, informing us of the state of the monastery of St. Augustine, in Canterbury, founded in 605, and in which Christianity was first preached by St. Augustine, during the reign of Ethelbert, King of Kent, was written by Henry Berry, a religious there, and a relation of Dame Agnes Paston, the widow of Sir William Paston, the judge, and the daughter of Sir Edmund Berry, about 1463 or 1464, as Abbot James Sevenoke died in 1463, and was succeeded by William Selling, who continued abbot till 1480. The letter is both pathetic and artful; the latter part from this mark * (see p. 176) to the subscription is crossed out, but not so entirely as to hinder me from decyphering it as here given. The character at the beginning of this letter I have often met with, and particularly at the beginning of letters written by ecclesiastics. It has some religious meaning I believe; I am apt to think it stands for I.H.S. and in this particular letter, considering the form of the initial R, I suppose the whole to mean Jesu Maria.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and reverend cousin, I commend me unto you with all mine heart as your faithful kinsman and orator, desiring to hear of the good prosperity and welfare of your worshipful mother my lady and cousin, with your wife, Sir John Paston, your brethren William and Clement, with all your sons and daughters, to whom I beseech you heartily that I may be recommended. God of his high mercy preserve you all unto his mercy and grace, and save you from all adversity.

Worshipful cousin, my special writing and

heart's desire before rehearsed, nature naturally so me compelleth,

What though I be put far out of conceit and sight, I have you all in remembrance both day and night;

beseeking you, gentle cousin, to tender my writing. I take God to my witness I would as fain do that might be unto your honour, worship, and profit as any earthly man can think.

Wherefore now late died the abbot of our monastery, and left us in great debt; the bringer hereof is my special friend. The oldest brother in our place never heard nor saw our church in that misery that (*it*) is now; we have cast⁶ the perils amongst us,

¹ John Markham, Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1462. Robert Danby, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1462.

² Thomas Lyttelton, the famous lawyer, was created a serjeant in 1453, and appointed a judge of the Common Pleas in 1467; he died in 1481, aged 79.

³ George Neville, now Bishop of Exeter, but soon after the writing of this letter translated to York.

⁴ Clement Paston, brother to John Paston.

⁵ This relates to the disputes concerning Sir John Fastolf's will.

⁶ *We have cast* may here signify either that we have considered the perils, or that we have divided them amongst us.

and there is none other help, but every brother that hath any worshipful kin or friends, every man to do his part to the welfare, and succour, and relief of our monastery.

Therefore worshipful cousin, I, a brother of that worshipful monastery wherein begun the faith of all this land, meekly beseecheth you in the reverence of Almighty God, to render help, and succour us in our great necessity; for in London lieth to wad (*pawn*) many rich jewels of ours, with other great debts, which my brother will inform you of.

Pleaseth your goodness, for God's sake, and all the saints of Heaven, and at my simple request, to have compassion upon us, ye having due surety both in obligations and pledges.

In the reverence of Almighty God do your alms and charity; it shall cause you to be

prayed for, and all your kin as long as the church standeth; and by this means, I trust to Almighty God, to see my cousin William, or Clement, to be steward of our lands, and so to have an interest in Kent, to the worship of God and you all, which ever have you in his keeping. Amen.

Written at Canterbury in haste the 28th day of January.

Also I beseech you show the bringer of this letter some humanity and worship, that when he cometh home he may report as he findeth.

* This is the cause every while they put my kin in my beard, saying, I am come of lords, knights, and ladies, I would they were in your danger 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that they might know you, &c.

By your cousin and beadman,

HENRY BERRY.

Canterbury,
28th of January,
1463 or 1464.
3 or 4 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXIV.—(XLV. vol. iv. p. 159.)

This letter was written at a time when Edward, having confiscated many of the estates of the Lancastrians, and granted them to those of his own party, was by mildness and affability endeavouring to become popular.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, the elder, Esq.

PLEASE your mastership to weet that the assize¹ hold this day at Thetford; and as for any new assize that ye spoke of there is none, nor none there saving one for a man about Brunham.

I spake with Herward, and I asked him if there was any great day at Bury, and he said there was but a small day, and as for any assizes there were none but old; and he told me that Debenham and the under-sheriff were fallen out; Debenham bare the sheriff on hand that he had do (*caused to be*) indicted an hundred men since he came into his office, and the sheriff told him that the king's books

appeared whether it was so or not, and he told Debenham that he could indict an hundred at one time when ye were indicted, and named you the cause of their breaking.

There was a man killed now late in Suffolk, and he that did it was one of Debenham's men, and Herward told me that the sheriff said to him he would do Debenham a shrewd turn and (*if*) he could.

Item, it was told me at Norwich that Master Berney should have been here with a great fellowship, and it is not so, nor no man heareth of his coming, nor here is but little people neither, there were not so few this three years, as men say.

Item, Herward asked me where John Gayne was, and I asked why, and he said there is a

¹ William Calthorpe was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.

capias out against him upon the condemnation,¹ and the sheriff hath it, he bade me give him warning; it is returnable xv Pasche.²

Item, they say here that the king was on Monday at Waltham.

Item, Nicholas Colman hath brought home your fardel: it is at Norwich.

Item, there be no more judges here but Sir Pers Arden.³

Written at Thetford, the Wednesday the last day of February.

Item, Wymondham is here, and was at the Shire-house this day, and the king's livery about his neck,⁴ and there stood by the judge

while a letter of the king's was read; the effect was, as it was told me, that the king wills that justice be had, and that all risers against the peace and oppressors of the people be chastised, letting them weet that he was late in Cambridgeshire, and that there such as had offended asked grace, which they had, saving such as were rulers, whom he will somewhat be punished,⁵ proposing to be in this country about Easter.

Your Servant, JOHN PAMPYNGE.

Thetford, Wednesday,
the last day of February,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

¹ Query, as to this word, it being not perfect in the original?

² Quinzieme Pasche, the fifteenth day after Easter.

³ Sir Peter Arden, knight, was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, &c.

⁴ This was either some coloured ribbon, or, most probably, a collar with the king's device. Collars were at this time generally worn by persons of consequence, and by the fashion and form of them the rank of the wearer was intended to be ascertained; they were usually formed of SS, having on the centre before, a rose or some other device, and were made either of gold or silver, according to the rank,

dignity, or fortune of the wearer. By an act "For Reformation of Excess of Apparel," passed in the 24 H. VIII. 1532, ch. 13, it was enacted, "that no man, unless he be a knight, wear any collar of gold, named a collar of SS." This collar, therefore, from that time became the distinguishing badge of knighthood. [We give, as an illustration, a badge or collar worn by the friends of Richard, drawn by the late C. Stothard from an effigy of Ralph, second Earl of Westmoreland, in Brancepeth church, Durham.

⁵ [Fenn has *see punished*. The original is as above given, and means that he wills they be somewhat punished.]



LETTER CCXXV.—(XIX. vol. i. p. 285.)

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, dwelling in Caister, be this delivered.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I commend me unto you, beseeching you lowly of your blessing, desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, the which I pray God preserve unto his pleasance, and to your heart's desire; beseeching you to have me excused that ye had no writing from me since that I departed from you, for so God me help, I sent you a letter to London anon (*soon*) after Candlemas by a man of my lord's; and he forgot to deliver it to you, so he brought to me the letter again; and since that time I could get no messenger till now.

As for tidings such as we have here I send you.

My lord and my lady¹ are in good hele (*health*), blessed be God, and my lord hath great labour and cost here in Wales for to take diverse gentlemen here which were consenting and helping unto the Duke of Somerset's going; and they were appealed (*accused*) of other certain points of treason; and this matter, and because the king sent my lord word to keep this country, is (*the*) cause that my lord tarrieth here thus long; and now the king hath given my lord power whether he will do execution upon these gentlemen or pardon them, whether that him list (*pleaseth*), and as far forth as I can understand yet, they shall have grace, and as soon as these men be come in my lord is purposed to come to London, which I suppose shall be within this fortnight; the men's names that be impeached are these, John Hanmer, and William his son, Roger Puleston, and Edward of Madoc, these be men of worship that shall come in.

The commons in Lancashire and Cheshire

were up to the number of 10,000 or more, but now they be down again; and one or two of them was headed in Chester as on Saturday last past.

Thomas Daniel is here in Cheshire, but I wot not in what place; he hath sent three or four letters to Sir John Howard, since my lord came hither.

And other tidings have we none here but that I suppose ye have heard before; I suppose verily that it shall be so nigh Easter ere ever my lord come to London, that I shall not move² (*to*) come home to you before Easter; wherefore I beseech you that ye will vouchsafe that one of your men may send a bill to mine uncle Clement, or to some other man, who that ye will, in your name, that they may deliver me the money that I am behind of the quarter since Christmas; and for the next quarter, in part of that sum that it pleased you to grant me by the year; for by my truth the fellowship have not so much money as we wend (*thought*) to have had by right much; for my lord hath had great costs since he came hither.

Wherefore I beseech you that I may have this money at Easter,³ for I have borrowed money that I must pay again after Easter.

And I pray Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written in the castle of the Holt, in Wales, the first day of March.

Your son and lowly servant,

JOHN PASTON, *the youngest.*

Holt Castle,
Denbighshire,
1st March, 1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVI.—(XLVI. vol. iv. p. 165.)

Though this letter contains nothing very interesting, yet as it mentions the commission of the peace, and gives some account of a law process, I have thought proper to present it to the reader. It mentions likewise the offensive and defensive armour, &c., then in use; and concludes with some very serious and pressing advice to J. Paston to conclude his own intricate business relative to Sir John Fastolf's property, &c.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston the oldest, be this delivered in haste.

I recommend me, &c.

If it please you, I would right fain that John

Jenney were put out of the commission of the peace, and that my brother William Lunnor

¹ John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk.

² [So Fenn: but we think *move* is *mowe*, be able.

³ In 1464, Easter Sunday fell on the 25th March.

were set in his stead, for me thinketh it were right necessary that there were such a man in that county that oweth you good will, and I know verily he oweth you right good will: he was with me at Caister but late. If there be made any labour for Doctor Allen to be justice of the peace, I pray you for God's sake let it be letted if ye may, for he will take too much upon him if he were; I would not that he were remembered of your part, but if (*unless*) he be spoken of of other parts; he is right great with Master Philip Lypzate and the bailiff of Cossey.

If it please you to weet that Wykes did arrest one William Dylmyn of Norwich, as Pampynge can inform you of, for certain harness which he delivered him at Newcastle for to carry to Yarmouth by water, and there to deliver it to him again, which harness he kept still, and may not be delivered; and now there is come down an habeas corpus for him, and (*he*) must appear at the common place on Friday next coming; wherefore if it pleased you that there might be taken an action in Wykes's name of trespass, under such form as there may be a *capias* awarded against his coming; for after that he was arrested he did (*caused*) Daubeney to be arrested for maintaining;¹ and as for the harness, Wykes

delivered it to him the 10th day of January, the 2nd year of King Edward IV. (1462), in Pilgrim-street, at Newcastle; imprimis a pair (*of*) briganders, a salet [*light helmet and visor*], a boar-spear, a bow, eighteen arrows, two pair (*of*) pauldrons (*shoulder-pieces*), a standard of mail, a pair (*of*) sleeves of plate, to the value of five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*)

And at the reverence of God sloth not your matters now, and make an end of them; either purvey you to make them or to mar them in haste, for this is too horrible a cost and trouble that ye have and have had for to endure any while, and it is great heaviness to your friends and well-willers and great joy and comfort to your enemies.

My Lord of Norwich said to me that he would not abide the sorrow and trouble that ye have abiden to win all Sir John Fastolf's good. God be your speed in all your matters. Written at Heylesdon the 13th day of May.

I think right long to hear tidings till I have tidings from you.

Your

MARGARET PASTON.

13th of May,
between 1463 and 1465.
3 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVII.—(XLVII. vol. iv. p. 169.)²

No one can read this letter without feeling concern for the displeasure that Sir John had occasioned his mother by his improper departure; she tenderly blames his conduct, gives him the advice of a kind, affectionate and sensible parent, and at the same time is anxious to hear of his welfare. Her account of Jane Walsham's regard for Wykes is natural and pleasing, and interests the reader in her behalf. The whole letter is written in a clear and easy style, and shows the maternal affection of the writer for her son.

To my well-beloved son, Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I have received a letter from you the which ye delivered to Master Roger at Lynn, whereby I conceive that ye think ye did not well that ye departed hence without my knowledge, wherefore I let you weet I was right evil paid² with you; your father thought, and thinketh yet, that I was assented to your departing, and that hath caused me to have great heaviness;

I hope he will be your good father hereafter if ye demean you well, and do as ye ought to do to him; and I charge you upon my blessing that in anything touching your father that should be (*to*) his worship, profit, or avail, that ye do your devoir and diligent labour to the furtherance therein as ye will have my good will, and that shall cause your father to be better father to you.

It was told me ye sent him a letter to London; what the intent thereof was I wot not, but though he take it but lightly, I would ye should not spare to write to him again as

¹ [Maintenance. See Letter cxxiii. p. 103.]

² [Appayed—content.]

lowly as ye can, beseeching him to be your good father; and send him such tidings as be in the country there ye beeth, and that ye ware [*guard*] of your expenses better and (*than*) ye have been before this time, and be your own purse-bearer; I trow ye shall find it most profitable to you.

I would ye should send me word how ye do, and how ye have shifted for yourself since ye departed hence, by some trusty man, and that your father have no knowledge thereof; I durst not let him know of the last letter that ye wrote to me, because he was so sore displeased with me at that time.

Item, I would ye should speak with Wykes, and know his disposition to Jane Walsham; she hath said since he departed hence but (*unless*) she might have him she would never (*be*) married, her heart is sore set on him; she told me that he said to her that there was no woman in the world he loved so well; I would not he should jape (*deceive*) her, for she meaneth good faith; and if he will not have her let me weet in haste, for I shall purvey for her in other wise.

As for your harness and gear that ye left

here, it is in Daubeney's keeping; it was never removed since your departing because that he had not the keys; I trow it shall apeyer (*grow worse*) but if (*unless*) it be taken heed at betimes; your father knoweth not where it is.

I sent your grey horse to Ruston to the farrier, and he saith he shall never be nought to ride neither right good to plough nor to cart; he said he was splayed, and his shoulder rent from the body; I wot not what to do with him.

Your grandam would fain hear some tidings from you; it were well done that ye sent a letter to her how ye do as hastily as ye may, and God have you in his keeping, and make you a good man, and give you grace to do well as I would ye should do.

Written at Caister, the Tuesday next before Saint Edmund the king (20th of November).

Your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

I would ye should make much of the parson of Filby, the bearer hereof, and make him good cheer if ye may.

Caister, Tuesday, November,
between 1463 and 1466. 3 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVIII.—(XLVIII. vol. iv. p. 173.)

It is very difficult to fix any date to this letter, as not only the writer of it, but the persons mentioned in it, are new to us. The injury sustained by T. Daverse from Pinchester is likewise inexplicable. Who is Lady Anne P.?—and how are we to explain the expression "as white as whale's bone?" The mention of Ovid's works is curious, and the application humorous and witty. The subscription to this letter is T. D., which is explained by "T. Daverse" being written under the direction, I believe by the hand of the receiver. The family of Davers were of considerable standing in the county of Suffolk, and advanced to the dignity of baronet in 1682.

To my right good master, Sir John Paston, knight.

My right special good master, I recommend me to you, thanking you right heartily of your gentle letter late sent to me; and as to Pinchester's matter, &c. I would I were your ninth kinsman if it pleased God, and then should I know if it should grieve your heart as much as it doth other of my kin and friends to see me thus cowardly hurt by Pinchester causeless; and of mine intent in that matter William Rabbes shall tell you more; also I beseech you to recommend me to my lord's good grace, as to him whom of earthly estates next my duty I most love and dread, and that should he well know and it lay in my power, praying you heartily to declare (*to*)

his lordship such matter as William Rabbes shall inform you, and to send me my lord's answer.

Also inasmuch as I understood by you that money should cause you conclusion in your matter this next term, and ye will be at London on Monday at night or Tuesday by noon, I trust that I have studied such a mean, that, upon surety as ye may make, to get you an hundred pounds or two hundred marks (133l. 6s. 8d.) to be lent unto you for an half year, without any cheviance¹ or loss of

¹ [*Chevissance*—an agreement or composition, as an order set down between a creditor and his debtor. It seems here used for usury.]

goods by you, as William Rabbes shall tell you more, &c.

And as to Ovid 'De Arte Amandi,' I shall send him you the next week, for I have him not now ready; but me thinketh Ovid 'De Remedio' were more meet for you, but if (*unless*) ye purposed to fall hastily in my Lady Anne P.'s lap as white as whale's bone, &c. Ye be the best chooser of a gentlewoman that I know, &c.; and I pray you to recommend me to my Lord¹ of Oxford, and to my good masters, Needham, Richmond, Chippingham,

Stavely, Bloxham, Stuard, and Ingulton in special, and all other good masters and friends in general, &c. And, Sir, Mistress Gaydade recommend me (*q. her*) to you and said bussing fare for charity, and she said (*to*) me she would fain have a new fillet, &c.

Written at London the 29th day in January,

With heart and service,

Your THOMAS DAVERSE.

London, 29 January,
between 1463 and 1469.
3 and 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXIX.—(XLIX. vol. iv. p. 177.)

This letter was written in 1464, about the time that King Henry VI. was taken and committed to the Tower, an order having been issued in May for the subjects of this kingdom to take arms and attend King Edward. The Commission of Inquiry seems to relate to this order, which most probably was enforced for the more easy discovery of the unfortunate prince, who perhaps was by this time lodged in the Tower, as those gentlemen who had obeyed it were now dismissed and returned home.

To mine right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you; pleaseth you to weet that I sent yesterday Loveday to Norwich to speak with the vicar of Dereham² for the matter between Master Constantine and him, and he saith that as for that matter Master Constantine sued him for faith and truth breaking, and he sued Master Constantine in the temporal court upon an obligation of ten pounds; and there was made an appointment between them, by the advice of both their counsels, before Master Robert Popy, that each of them should release other, and so they did, and the sureties were withdrawn on both parties, and each of them acquitanced other: and as for any copy of the plea he had never none, nor he, nor Master John Estgate, that was his attorney remembereth not that it was registered; and Master John Estgate saith, if it should be searched in the register it would take a fortnight's work, and yet peradventure never be the nearer.

Sir Thomas Howes³ hath been right busy this week at Blofield in writing and looking up of gear, and John Russe hath been with

him there the most part of all this week, and this day was Robert Lynne there with him; what they have done I wot not, but I shall weet if I may.

It was told me that Sir Thomas desired of John Russe to make him a new inventory of Sir John Fastolf's goods; John Russe might not be spoken with yet for the letter that he should have written which ye sent me word of.

Item, it is told that the Duke of Suffolk⁴ is come home, and either he is dead, or else right sick, and not like to escape; and Sir John Howard is come home; and it is said that the Lord Scales and he have a commission to inquire why they of this country that were sent for came not hastilier up after they were sent for. It is reported that the king is greatly displeased therewith.

At the reverence of God arm yourself as mightily ye can against your enemies,⁵ for I know verily that they will do again you as mightily as they can with all their power.

It is told me that Sir Thomas shall come up in haste, and other such as he can make for his party.

Also for God's sake beware what medicines

¹ Fenn by mistake gives *Lady*.]

² Constantine Dalby was instituted to the vicarage of East Dereham, in 1451, and was succeeded in 1456, by Robert Sheringham.

³ J. Paston and Thomas Howes had at this time disagreed about executorship of Sir J. Fastolf's will.

⁴ John Duke of Suffolk did not die till 1491.

⁵ These may either mean those enemies which the affairs of Sir John Fastolf had caused him, or those which the national disputes had occasioned.

ye take of any physicians of London; ¹ I shall never trust to them because of your father and mine uncle, whose souls God assoil!

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters. Written in haste, on the Friday next before St. Barnabas.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

All the gentlemen of this country that went up to the king are countermanded, and are come home again. It is told me that Rous of Suffolk is dead;² if John Gayn might have any release of his son, if it might do him ease, it were a good turn for him.

Friday, 8th June,
1464. 4 E. IV.

NUMBER CCXXX.—(L. vol. iv. p. 183.)

From this appointment of the king it appears that grants for foundations of religious establishments were made one mean of raising money for the service of the crown; and that the royal protection was likewise obtained by a present of money or plate. Whether the terms by which the king's favour was now to be procured were fulfilled by John Paston, or whether his majesty had any reasons for withdrawing his protection, does not appear, but in the following year the royal favour was forfeited, and J. Paston was a prisoner by the king's command. During this year the king was moving from place to place, and by condescension and affability acquiring popularity.

Appointment of the king for the foundation of a college at Caister, &c.

THE king, for the sum of 300 marks (200*l.*) of lawful money of England, or of silver plate to the value thereof, granteth to John Paston the elder, Esquire, to have licence lawfully made, to make and found a college of seven priests, and seven poor folk at Caister, in Flegg (*hundred*) in Norfolk, for the soul of Sir John Fastolf, knight; they to be endued with certain rent and otherwise, after the intent and effect as is specified in a bill thereof signed by the king; and that he shall show his good grace, favour, and assistance to have the said foundation enacted and authorized in the parliament next holden, and discharge the said John Paston and the said priests of any other fine or fee to be made in the Chancery for the said foundation, and that the king shall sign and grant warrants for said licence, and show his good grace and favour in the expedition thereof, what time he be sued to therefore by the said John Paston.

Also, the king granteth to be good and favourable lord to the said John Paston, and in especial in all things touching the execution of the will of the said Sir John Fastolf, and also to be good and favourable lord to the said John Paston in supporting and helping him in that the king's highness may lawfully do, in such matters as are in debate atwixt the said John Paston and William

Yelverton, or William Jenney, or any other, concerning the lands and tenements, goods or chattels, that were the said Sir John Fastolf's; also the king granteth to help and support the said John Paston to obtain and have to the use of the said Sir John Fastolf, such goods as were the said Fastolf's, deceitfully aloynd (*removed*) out of the possession and knowledge of the said John Paston, and that the king shall grant the said John Paston such lawful writings and letters from the king, directed to such persons as shall be behoveful for the same, what time the said John Paston sueth to the king's highness therefore.

Also where Yelverton or Jenney, or any justice of the peace of the shire of Suffolk, hath recorded any riot, trespass, or offences to be done against the king's peace by the said John Paston, his servants, or tenants, or friends; or where any indictment or presentment is found against them, or any of them, before any of the said justices, for any such riot, offences, trespass, or for any other matter remaining of record in the King's Bench, or in any other place, the king granteth to the said John Paston, and all other persons named in the said records or indictments, or in any of them, and to all their boroughs (*sureties*) and pledges, and to each of them that will sue it,

¹ How her father and her uncle had suffered from London physicians does not appear.

² Reginald Rous, Esq. of Deunington, in Suffolk, died in 1464.

a pardon of all riots, trespasses, offences, felonies, forfeitures done against the king's peace, and of fines therefore dempt (*adjudged*) or to be dempt, and of all other things generally, treason except, and that the king shall sign warrants lawfull of the said pardons, what time his highness be required by the said John Paston or his attorneys.

And also that his highness shall do (*cause*) inquiry and examination (*to*) be made whether the said record of the said justices, and presentments and other informations or complaints made against the said John Paston, were done truly and lawfully or not; and if it be found that they were done otherwise than truth, law, or conscience will, then the king granteth to cause the doers thereof to recompense the said John Paston, and the said other persons, as far as law and good conscience will in that behalf.

And that if it fortune any complaint to be made against the said John Paston, by any person in time coming, to the king, that he shall take no displeasure to the said John Paston till the time he come to his answer and be found in default.

And that the king shall receive 100*l.* of the said 300 marks what time he send for it, and the remanent as soon as the said foundation take effect; and also that his highness shall get the assent of the reverend father in God the Archbishop of Canterbury, in such appointments as is made atwixt the king and the said John Paston of such goods

as were the said Sir John Fastolf's, for the delivery thereof, and that if the said John Paston refuse the administration of the goods and chattels that were the said Sir John Fastolf's, suffering other to take it upon them. the king, at the instance of the said John Paston, granteth to be good and favourable lord to such other as (*by*) the course of the law, and assent of the said John Paston, shall take the said administration in execution of the said Fastolf's will, touching the administration of the goods and chattels aforesaid, according to the same will; and that the king shall not claim nor desire any of the lands or tenements, goods or chattels that were the said Sir John Fastolf's against the said John Paston or any other executor, administrator, or feoffee of the said Sir John Fastolf, nor support or favour any other person in claiming any of the said lands or tenements, goods or chattels, against any of the said administrators, executors, or feoffees.

Also the king granteth that whereas this bill is not sufficiently made in clauses and terms according to the intent thereof, that his highness will take and execute the very intent thereof, notwithstanding the insufficiency of any such terms and clauses in this bill. Written at Marlborough, the Monday next after the nativity of our Lady, the fourth year of the reign of the king.

Marlborough, Wiltshire,
Monday, 10th of September,
1464. 4 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXI.—(LI. vol. iv. p. 189.)

The exact year when this letter was written cannot be determined, but it must have been during J. Paston's troubles in the latter part of his life, between 1464 and 1466.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that I have spoken with Strange's wife of the matter that ye spoken to me of, and she saith plainly to me by her faith that she knew never none such, nor never heard of none such, and told to me in like wise as she had said to James Gloys, and she said to me if she could inquire of any other that she thought should have knowledge of any such, she should weten of them, and letten me have knowledge thereof;

and if ye suppose that any other be in this country that ye think should have knowledge of this foresaid matter, if ye will send me word thereof I shall do my part therein.

Also I have been at Swainsthorp and spoken with Kokett and he saith that he will do like as ye bade me that I should say to him for to do. And I have spoken with the sexteyn (*sexton*), and said to him as ye bade me that I should do, and he asked me right faithfully how ye sped in your matters.

I told him that ye had fair behests, and I

said I hoped that ye should do right well therein; and he said he supposed that D——¹ would do for you; but he said he was no hasty labourer in none matter; he said by his faith he wist where a man was that laboured to him for a matter right a long time, and always he behested that he would labour it effectually; but while he sued to him he could never have remedy of his matter, and then when he thought that he should no remedy have to sue to him, he spake with Fynes,² that is now Speaker of the parliament, and prayed him that he would do for him in his matter, and gave him a reward; and within right short time after his matter was sped; and the said sexteyn³ and other folks that be your right well-willers have counselled me that I should counsel you to make other means than ye have made to other folks, that would speed your matters better than they have done that ye have spoken to thereof before this time. Sundry folks have said to me that they think verily but if (*unless*) ye have my Lord of Suffolk's⁴ good lordship, while the werd (*world*) is as it is, ye can never live in peace without ye have his good lordship; therefore I pray you with all mine

heart that ye will do your part to have his good lordship and his love in ease of all those matters that ye have to do, and in easing of mine heart also, for by my truth I am afraid else, both of these matters the which ye have in hand now, and of other that be not done to yet, but if (*unless*) he will do for you and be your good lord. I pray you heartily send me word how ye do, and how ye speed in your matters; and I pray you as for such things as James hath a bill of, that I may have them as hastily as ye may; and that ye will vouchsafe to buy a piece of black buckram for to line with a gown for me, I should buy me a murrey gown to go in this summer, and lay in the collar the satin that ye gave me for an hood; and I can get none good buckram in this town to line it with. The holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters.

Written at Norwich, on the Friday next after Crouchmas day.⁵

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich Friday,
May, between 1464 and 1466.
4 and 6 E. IV.

† LETTER CCXXXII.—(LII. vol. iv. p. 195.)

This letter discovers to us some of the politics of the times, probably when the Earl of Warwick had taken displeasure at the king's marriage, and informs us that the Yorkists were fearful that too much lenity might be shown to the Lancastrians: to what good lord Margaret Paston and her husband wished her cousin Rookwood to be faithful is not mentioned, it probably was to the Duke of Norfolk. We find also that the exportation of wool was [considered] an hardship upon the poor, who by that means were deprived of work in that branch of the manufacture which affected their spinning, &c.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; pleaseth it you to weet that I received your letter that ye sent me by Nicholas Colman on Sunday last past; and as for the

matter that ye desired me to break of to my cousin Rookwood, it fortuneth so that he came to me on Sunday to dinner, soon after that I had your letter, and when we had dined, I

¹ Perhaps this may mean John Damme, a person often mentioned in these letters, and who was member of parliament for the city of Norwich in 1451.

² It does not appear what relation this Fynes was to Sir Richard Fynes, who married Joan, daughter and heir of Lord Dacre of the south, by which title in her right he was summoned to parliament in 1459. The reward given to Fynes seems previous to his being elected Speaker. [He was doubtless a lawyer, like Damme, and the reward was his fee.]

³ The sacrist or sexton of the priory of Norwich, was the officer who had the care of the sacra or holy things, as the church plate, copes, &c.; he was likewise secretary, auditor, and chancellor of the convent, and had a subsacrist or deputy to perform the servile parts of his office. In 1444 Brother Richard de Walsham was appointed sacrist.

⁴ John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.

⁵ Crouchmas day, or the Invention of the Cross, was on the 3d of May.

moved to him thereof in covert terms, as Playters shall inform you hereafter; and as I thought by him, and so did Playters also, by the language that he had to us, that he would be as faithful as he could or might be to that good lord that ye wrote of, and to you also, in anything that he could or might do, in case were that he were set in office so that he might aught do, and thereto he said he would be bound in 1000*l.*, and (if) he was so much worth.

As for the other that ye desired I should move to of the same matter, me seemeth he is too young to take any such things upon him, and also I know verily that he shall never love faithfully the other man that ye desired that he should do, for when he remembereth the time that is past; and therefore I spake not to him thereof.

This day was holden a great day at Okyll (*Acle*) before the under-sheriff and the under-escheator for the matter of Sir John Fastolf's lands, and there was my cousin Rookwood, and my cousin John Berney of Reedham, and divers other gentlemen and thrifty men of the country, and the matter is well sped after your intent, blessed be God! as ye shall have knowledge of in haste.

I suppose Playters shall be with you on Sunday or on Monday next coming if he may; ye have many good prayers of the poor people that God should speed you at this parliament, for they live in hope that ye should help to set a way that they might live in better peace in this country than they have done before, and that wools should be purveyed for that they should not go out of this land, as it hath been suffered to do before, and then shall the poor people more live better than they have done by their occupation therein. Thomas Bone hath sold all your wool here for 20*d.* a stone, and good surety found to you therefore to be paid at Michaelmas next coming, and it is sold right well after that,¹ (*because*) the wool was for the most part right feeble.

Item, there be bought for you three horses at St. Faith's² fair, and all be trotters, right

fair horses, God save them, and they be well kepted.

Item, your mills at Heylesdon be let for twelve marks (8*l.*) and the miller to find the reparation; and Richard Calle hath let all your lands at Caister; but as for Maultby lands they be not let yet. William White hath paid me again this day his 10*l.*, and I have made him an acquittance thereof because I had not his obligation.

There is great talking in this country of the desire of my Lord of York,³ the people report full worshipfully of my Lord of Warwick, they have no fear here but that he and other should show too great favour to them that have been rulers of this country before time.

I have done all your errands to Sir Thomas Howes that ye wrote to me for; I am right glad that ye have sped well in your matters betwixt Sir Philip Wentworth and you, and so I pray God ye may do in all other matters to his pleasure.

As for the writings that ye desired that Playters should send you, Richard Calle told me that they were at Harry Barber's, at the Temple Gate.

The mayor⁴ and the mayoress sent hither their dinners this day, and John Damme came with them, and they dined here; I am beholden to them for they have sent to me divers times since ye yed (*went*) hence; the mayor saith that there is no gentleman in Norfolk that he would do more for than he would for you, if it lay in his power to do for you.

J. Perse⁵ is still in prison, but he will not

³ George Neville became Archbishop of York in 1464, and died in 1476.

⁴ As the exact date of the year of this letter cannot be ascertained, we cannot determine who this mayor of Norwich was, though it must have been either John Gilbert, Thomas Ellis, or John Chytcock. John Damme had been the recorder, and might perhaps be so now. [This is a curious trait—the mayor and mayoress of Norwich send their own dinners to a gentleman's house where they go to dine; nor is it noticed as anything out of the common course; indeed, "they have sent to me divers times" may imply that they sent dinners.]

⁵ What offence Perse had committed does not appear, nor can I understand the expression "that the dede may have part of hys own goode." An ingenious friend suggested the following explanation: might not Perse have murdered some one and secreted

¹ [At that, i.e. price, as we say now.]

² [Near Norwich. There is still a considerable fair at this place, but chiefly for lean cattle.]

confess more than he did when ye were at home. Edmund Brome was with me, and told me that Perse sent for him for to come speak with him, and he told me that he was with him and examined him, but he would not be a knowe (*acknowledge*) to him, that he had no knowledge where no goods was of his master's more than he had knowledged to you; he told me that he sent for him to desire him to labour to you and to me for him if ye had been at home; and he told me that he said to him again that he would never labour for him but (*unless*) he might know that he were true to his master, though it lay

in his power to do right much for him; I suppose it should do none harm though the said Perse were removed further. I pray to God give grace that the truth may be known, and that the dead may have part of his own goods, and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written in haste, at Heylesdon, the Tuesday next after St. Luke.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,
Tuesday, October,
between 1464 and 1466.
4 and 6 E. IV.

'LETTER CCXXXIII.—(LIII. vol. iv. p. 201.)

I have given this letter as containing not only the whole process of a replevin, but likewise to show the disagreeable situation the tenants of the lands and manors were put into when the landlords and lords of manors disagreed. Drayton and Heylesdon had been the manors of Sir John Fastolf, and were now by his death in the possession of John Paston, as one of his executors and trustees; this letter therefore must have been written after Sir John's decease. A replevin is a writ (*Replegiare de averiis*) brought by one whose cattle are distrained or put in pound upon any cause by another, upon surety given to the sheriff to pursue or answer the action at law.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

PLEASE it you to weet that on Saturday last your servants Naunton, Wykes, and others were at Drayton, and there took a distress for the rent and farm that was to pay, to the number of seventy-seven neat (*beasts*), and so brought them home to Heylesdon, and put them in the pin-fold, and so kept them still there from the said Saturday morning unto Monday three at clock at afternoon. First on the same Saturday the tenants followed upon, and desired to have their cattle again: and I answered them if they would do pay such dewts (*debts or dues*) as they ought for to pay to you, that then they should have their cattle delivered again; or else if they were not a power

(*were not able*) to pay ready money, that then they to find sufficient surety to pay the money at such a day as they might agree with me, and thereto to be bounden to you by obligation; and that they said they durst not for to take upon them for to be bounden, and as for money they had none for to pay at that time, and therefore I kept still the beasts.

Harleston was at Norwich, and sent for the tenants the said Saturday at afternoon, and there, by the means of the bailiff of Cossey, put the tenants in such fear, saying that if they would pay such debts, or else for to be bounden to pay, that then they would put them out of such lands as they held bondly of the lordship, and so to distrain them and trouble them that they should be weary of their part; and that put them (*in*) such fear that they durst neither pay nor be bounden.

And on the Sunday at even-songtime Harleston came to me to Heylesdon, desiring me that I would deliver again the said distress; and as for such distresses as they had taken here of your tenants (*they*) should be delivered again in like form; and I said I would not deliver them so, and I told him that I would deliver them as is written afore and otherwise not,

his goods, which he refuses to acknowledge, but part of which, if they had been discovered, would have been disposed of for the benefit of the soul of the deceased, in procuring masses, &c., to be sung for him, so that in fact by these means the *dead might be said to have part of his own goods*? This explanation will appear perhaps far-fetched, but it is adduced solely with a hope that it might prove a clue to a discovery of the real meaning of this passage. [A murderer Perse could not have been from the terms in which they speak of him, and the way in which he seeks for assistance. But he might have been servant to some one who had died, and have been suspected of secreting his master's goods.]

and otherwise I would not deliver them but by the form of law. And other communication was had between us at that time of divers matters which were too long to write at this time, but ye shall have knowledge thereof in haste.

And on Monday next after at nine at clock there came Pynchemore to Heylesdon with a replevin, which was made in Harleston's name as under-steward of the duchy, saying that the beasts were taken upon the duchy fee, wherefore he desired me to make him livery of the said beasts so taken; and I said I would not deliver them unto the time that I had examined the tenants of the truth, and so I sent thither Wykes with Pynchemore to understand what they would say; and the tenants said that there was taken none upon the duchy at their knowledge, save only Pyrse Waryn the younger, and Paynter, said that their cattle was taken upon the duchy, which they cannot prove by none record save only by their own saying; and so we would not

obey that replevin and so they departed; and at three at clock at afternoon Pynchemore came to Heylesdon again with two men which brought with them a replevin from the sheriff, whose names be John Witherley and Robert Ranson, which required me by the same replevin to make them delivery of the said beasts taken at Drayton; and so I, seeing the sheriff's replevin and under his seal, bade my men deliver them, and so they were delivered.

And as for all other matters that ye have written to (me) of, I will speed me to send you an answer as hastily as I may, for I may no leisure have to write no more to you this time. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Heylesdon the 20th day of May

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,
Monday, 20th of May.
1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXIV.—(LIV. vol. iv. p. 207.)

The beginning of this letter is curious, at it furnishes us with an account of the process to dispossess a parson of his church; what Flowerdew had done to incur deprivation does not appear. John Flowerdew was instituted to the rectory of Drayton on the 15th of March, 1461, on the presentation of John Paston, Esq. and Thomas Howes, clerk. At the time that this and the foregoing letter was written, there was a dispute between the executors of Sir John Fastolf and the Duke of Suffolk concerning these estates at Drayton, Heylesdon, &c.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

Right worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I have sent to Master John Smyth and to Master Stephen to have advice for the church of Drayton; and they send me word that there must be had a commission from the bishop to call in the Parson Flowerdew, and that must be proclaimed in the church of Drayton three times by a dean,¹ and after that if he appear not within six months after the first proclamation, that then he for to be deprived, and the patron to present whom he lust (*lists*), and else your presentation is not sufficient. And I have so purveyed that a commission is had, and shall be served as hastily as it may be.

As for Richard Rysing I have sent to him to

weet the cause that he is not brought up to London, and he saith that he called upon the sheriff that he might be had up for (*to*) come to his answer, and the sheriff told him that he would not bring him up at his own cost; and John Andrews said that he would not have him up, and so he is still in prison at Ipswich, and so shall he be but if (*unless*) ye can find the better mean for to have him out; I have sent to him 13s. 4d. to help himself therewith, he payeth for his board weekly twenty-pence; and Hopton and Smith be there still also, and they have money enough wheresoever that they have it; Rysing deemeth that they have comfort of the other party; and I send you the copy of the warrant that they were arrested by, &c.

I spake not with my mother since Richard

¹ This means the rural dean.

Calle brought me the letter from you touching her matter, for I might have no leisure; when I speak with her at leisure I will remember her in that matter according to your writing; and as for your tenants of Drayton, as I can understand by them, they be right good and true-hearted to you to their powers, and full fain would that ye had it again in peace, for they had as leffe (*lief*) almost be tenants to the devil as to the Duke, except Will. Herne, Piers at Sloth, and one Knott of the same town, for they be not good.

All your tenants at Heylesdon and Drayton, except these three, be right glad that we are there amongst them, and so be many others of our old neighbours and friends; and but if (*unless*) ye come home by Wednesday or Thursday¹ in Whitsun week, I purpose me to see you in secret wise by Trinity Sunday² but

if (*unless*) ye send to me contrary commandment ere that time; and I pray you send me your advice how ye will that we do against the next shire, which shall be the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as for calling upon the replevin that the beasts of Drayton were delivered by.

Item, Richard Calle told me that ye desired to have Master Philip's name, and his name is Philip Lypzate, and I sent you a letter by Henry Wilton's man wherein I wrote Master Philip's name; and in the same letter I wrote to you for Will. Lumnor; I pray you send me word if ye have it, and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written the Monday next after Ascension day.³

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Monday, 27th of May,
1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXV.—(LV. vol. iv. p. 213.)

This and the following letter, giving an account of the proceedings of the Duke of Suffolk's men at Heylesdon, of their attempts there, and of the steps taken by those in possession to oppose them, exhibit a true picture of the times, when the numerous fellowships of the great men, sometimes with and sometimes without the knowledge of their lords, attacked the smaller fellowships of their inferior neighbours, either on a pretence of having some title to their estates, or under colour of having warrants to apprehend them on civil suits, or on prosecutions for felonies, &c.

To my master, John Paston, in haste.

PLEASETH it your mastership to weet of the rule and disposition of the M—— Philip⁴ and the bailiff of Cossey, with others of my Lord of Suffolk's men, on Monday last past at afternoon (*who*) were at Heylesdon with the number of three hundred men for to have entered, notwithstanding they said they came not for to enter, but without doubt and (*if*) they had been strong enough for us they would have entered, and that we understand now; but we knowing of their coming, and purveyed so for them, that we were strong enough; we had sixty men within the place, and guns, and such ordnance, so that if they had set upon us they had been destroyed; and there my mistress⁵ was within, and my

master Sir John, and (*he*) hath gotten him as great worship for that day as any gentleman might do, and so is it reported of the party and in all Norwich; and my Lord of Norwich⁶ sent thither Master John Salett and Master John Bulleman for to treat, and so they did; and the duke's men said they had a warrant for to attach John Daubeney, Wykes, Calle, Hunworth, and Blickling, and other, which they would have, and my master Sir John answered them and said that they were not within, and though we had been they should not have had them; and so they desired one of our men, and so Naunton stood by my mistress and asked them whom they would have, and said if they would have

¹ 5th or 6th of June. ² 9th of June.

³ 23rd of May.

⁴ This does not clearly point out the person. [Is it not the Philip Lipzate whose name is given in the preceding letter? We are inclined to think, also, that the M. before Philip does not in this place stand for *master*, but for the place, probably *manor*, in

which case the subsequent interpolation of *who* becomes unnecessary.]

⁵ We have often seen Margaret Paston in the character of wife, mother, and friend, but this is the first time of her appearance as the governess of a fortress, for such this may now be called.

⁶ Walter Lyhart, bishop of Norwich.

him he would go with them, and so he did, and on the next day they carried him forth to my Lord of Suffolk to Claxton, through Norwich, and there we had found a remedy for him for to have let [*hindered or stayed*] him, and he would not, but needs go forth with them; but like a gentleman he was entreated amongst them. And Harleston desired at Heylesdon to speak with my master Sir John, and so he did, and said to him it were right well done that he rode to my Lord of Suffolk, and desired him in any wise that he should do so, and said that it was his duty so for to do, inasmuch as my lord was come to (*the*) country, and that he would ride with him and bring him to my lord; and he answered and said to him, when that he understood that my lord were his father's good lord and his, that then he would see his lordship, and else he had none errand to him; and so they departed; and then appointment was taken that they should send home their men, and we should send home ours; and now my Lord of Suffolk's men come from Claxton to Norwich, and face us and fray upon us thus daily; there fell upon me before Swaine's door twelve of his men, eight of them in harness, and there they would have mischieved me, and the sheriff letted (*hindered*) hem and other, and they make their avaunt were [*wherever*] that I may be gotten I should die, and so they lie in await for to mischief me, Daubeney, and Wykes; and so I dare not ride out alone without a man with me; and I understand there is coming an oyer (*and*) determiner to inquire of all riots, and my Lord of Suffolk and Yelverton be commissioners; and so they say as many of us as

can be taken shall be indicted and hanged forthwith; and so the people here are dismayed with their rule, wherefore that it like you to send word how my mistress shall do at Heylesdon, and we in all other matters; and whether ye will that we fetch again the flock of Heylesdon, for they are now driven to Causton, and there go they on the heath; and my Lord of Suffolk will be at Drayton on Lammas day, and keep the court there, wherefore ye must seek a remedy for it or else it will not do well.

If my Lord of Norfolk¹ would come he should make all well, for they fear him above all things, for it is noised here that my Lord of Norfolk hath taken party in this matter, and all the country is glad of it, saying that if he come they will wholly go with him.

And me seemeth it were well done to move my lord in it though ye should give him the profits of Heylesdon and Drayton for the keeping, and some money beside; for ye must seek some other remedy than ye do, or else in my conceit it shall go to the devil and be destroyed, and that in right short time, and therefore at the reverence of God take some appointment with Master Yelverton, and such as ye think should most hurt.

I beseech you to pardon me of my writing, for I have pity to see the tribulation that my mistress hath here, and all your friends, &c.

Almighty Jesu preserve and keep you. Written the Wednesday next Saint Thomas's day (*7th of July*).

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.

Wednesday, 10th of July, 1465.

5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXVI.—(LVI. vol. iv. p. 219.)

Margaret Paston in this letter in some measure continues the narrative of the riotous proceedings at Heylesdon and Norwich against her husband's servants and tenants by the retainers of the Duke of Suffolk; she pathetically complains of her troubles both of body and mind, and gives an alarming account of her bad state of health; appearing, however, under all her misfortunes, the careful, tender, and amiable wife.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you, praying you heartily that ye will seek a mean that your servants may be in peace, for they be daily in fear of their lives; the Duke of Suffolk's men threaten daily Daubeney,

Wykes, and Richard Calle, that wheresoever they may get them they shall die; and affrays

¹ John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, whose favour, it appears here, must have been purchased at a high price.

have been made on Richard Calle this week, so that he was in great jeopardy at Norwich among them; and great affrays have been made upon me and my fellowship here on Mouday last past, of which Richard Calle telleth me that he hath sent you word of in writing more plainly than I may do at this time, but I shall inform you more plainly hereafter.

I suppose there shall be great labour against you and your servants at the assizes and sessions here, wherefore me seemeth, saving your better advice, it were well done that ye should speak with the justices ere they come here; and if ye will that I complain to them or to any other, if Good (*God*) fortune me life and health, I will do as ye advise me to do, for in good faith I have been simply entreated among them, and what with sickness and trouble that I have had, I am brought right low and weak, but to my power I will do as I can or may in your matters.

The Duke of Suffolk¹ and both the duchesses shall come to Claxton this day, as I am informed, and this next week he shall be at Cossey; whether he will come further hitherward or not I wot not yet; it is said that he should come hither, and yet his men said here on Monday that he claimed no title to this place. They said their coming was but to take out such riotous people as was here within this place, and such as were the king's felons, and indicted and outlawed men, nevertheless they would show no warrants whereby to take none such, though there had been

such here. I suppose if they might have come in peaceably they would have made another cause of their coming.

When all was done and they should depart, Harleston and other desired me that I should come and see mine old lady, and sue to my lord, and if anything were amiss it should be amended.

I said if I should sue for any remedy that I should sue further, and let the king and all the lords of this land to have knowledge what hath been done to us, if so were that the Duke would maintain that hath been done to us by his servants, if ye would give me leave.

I pray you send me word if ye will that I make any complaint to the Duke or the Duchess, for as it is told me² they know not the plainness³ that hath been done in such things as hath been done in their names.⁴

I should write much more to you but for lack of leisure.

I commanded my master Tom this day to have come again by me from Norwich when he had spoken with Richard Calle, but he came not; I would he were quit of his indictment so that he were quit of your service, for by my truth I hold the place the more ungracious that he is in for his disposition in divers things, the which ye shall be informed of hereafter.

The Trinity have you in keeping. Written the Friday next after Saint Thomas.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Friday, 12th of May,
1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXVII.—(LVII. vol. iv. p. 225.)

The ease and familiar style of this letter will not be displeasing to the reader; perhaps he will smile at the particular directions concerning J. Paston's hose, and his minute description of the hosier.

To my mistress, Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste at London.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of

¹ John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and sister of King Edward IV. The Duchess his mother, the relict of the late Duke of Suffolk, was daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, Esq., and was grand-daughter to that famous poet, Geoffrey Chaucer. She died in 1475.

² It seems from her expressions here that this riotous fellowship had proceeded to these outrageous

your blessing; please it you to weet that I have sent to my father to have an answer of

lengths without the Duke's knowledge, and that she appears to believe the report to be true.

³ [In original *pleynesse*,—fulness or extent.]

⁴ [This is not the language or style of thought that would be used by a people accustomed to the oppression of an overpowering aristocracy. Dukes and Duchesses appear to weigh very little with Margaret Paston, while she feels conscious of her right.]

such matters as I have sent to him for in haste, of which matters the greatest of substance is for the manor of Cotton, beseeching you to remember him of the same matter that I may have an answer in the most hasty wise.

Also I pray you that mine aunt Poynings may be desired to send me an answer of such matters as she woteth of by him that shall bring me an answer of the matter of Cotton.

Also, mother, I beseech you that there may be purveyed some mean that I might have sent me home by the same messenger two pair of hose, one pair black and another pair of russet, which be ready made for me at the hosier's with the crooked back, next to the Black Friar's-gate within Ludgate; John Pampynge knoweth him well enough I suppose, and (*if*) the black hose be paid for he will send me the russet unpaid for; I beseech you that this gear be not forgotten, for I have

not an whole hose for to don; I trow they shall cost both pair 8s.

My brother,¹ and my sister Anne,² and all the garrison of Heylesdon fare well, blessed be God, and recommend them to you everych (*every*) one.

I pray you visit the Rood of Northdoor and St. Saviour at Bermondsey,³ among while ye abide (*during your abode*) in London, and let my sister Margery⁴ go with you to pray to them that she may have a good husband ere she come home again: and now I pray you send us some tidings as ye were wont to command me; and the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and my fair mistress of the Fleet. Written at Norwich, on Holy Rood day.

Your son and lowly servant,

JOHN PASTON, *the youngest*.

Norwich, Saturday,
14th of September, 1465.5 E IV.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.—(LVIII. vol. iv. p. 227.)

We who fortunately live at a time of peace and domestic tranquillity, can scarcely believe the picture of savage manners here represented; if the Duke of Suffolk were ignorant of, or did not even encourage such proceedings, it can hardly be supposed that his retainers dared to have done such mischief; they certainly must know that what they did would not meet with their lord's displeasure. Their behaviour in the church is very extraordinary, as papists almost universally pay great respect not only to their priests, but to their places of public worship, esteeming them as sacred, and on no pretence to be violated or profaned. On the back of the original letter is written in an ancient hand, "A Lre concerning the extreme dealing of the Duke of Suff. at Haylesdon." [These cases of disputed right, and actions of ejectment, seem ever to have been conducted with singular rudeness and barbarity. The scene here depicted, and which Fenn says we can scarcely believe, is by no means of unrequent occurrence at the present day in Ireland. The presence of the bailiffs of Eye and Stradbroke clearly shows that it was a *legal* proceeding, though Margaret Paston calls it a robbery. All excesses of the acting agents are of course uniformly repudiated by their employers.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste,

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I was at Heylesdon upon Thursday last past, and saw the place there, and in good faith there will no creature think how foully and horribly it is arrayed⁵ but if (*unless*) they saw it; there cometh much people daily to wonder thereupon, both of Norwich and of other places, and they speak shamefully thereof; the Duke had by better than a thousand pound that it had never been done, and ye have the more good will of the people that it is so foully done; and they made your tenants of Heyles-

don and Drayton, with other, to help to break down the walls of the place and the lodge both, God knoweth full evil against their wills, but that they durst none other wise do for fear; I have spoken with your tenants of Heylesdon and Drayton both, and put them in comfort as well as I can: the Duke's men ransacked the church, and bare away all the good that was left there, both of ours and of the tenants, and left not so much but that they stood upon the high altar and ransacked the images, and took away such as they might find, and put away the parson out of the

¹ Sir John Paston.

² Anne Paston, afterwards wife of W. Yelverton.

³ The Abbey of Saint Saviour at Bermondsey, in Surrey, was founded in 1081, 15th William the Conqueror, by Alwin Child of London; it was surrendered in 1539, 31 H. VIII. when it was pulled

down, and a fair house built on the site by Sir Thomas Pope, knight.

⁴ Margery Paston, she afterwards married Richard Calle.

⁵ [In original *arrayed*, doubtlessly for harried or herried—damaged or destroyed.]

church till they had done; and ransacked every man's house in the town five or six times; and the chief masters of robbing was the bailiff of Eye, the bailiff of Stradbrook, Thomas Slyford, and Porter; and Slyford was the chief robber of the church, and he hath most of the robbery next the bailiff of Eye; and as for lead, brass, pewter, iron, doors, gates, and other stuff of the house, men of Cossey and Cawston have it, and that they might not carry they have hewn asunder in the most despitous wise. If it might be I would some men of worship might be sent from the king to see how it is both there and at the Lodge, ere than any snows¹ come, that they may make report of the truth, else it shall not mowe be seen so plainly as it may now; and at the reverence of God speed your matters now, for it is too horrible a cost and trouble that we have now daily, and must have till it be otherwise; and your men dare not go about to gather up your livelihood, and we keep here daily more than thirty persons for salvation of us and the place, for in very truth and (*if*) the place had not been kept strong the Duke had come hither.

Arblaster thinketh verily that Hugh a Fenn may do much in your matters, and he thinketh he will do for you faithfully if ye will, &c.

At the reverence of God, if any worshipful and profitable mean may be taken in your matters, forsake it not in eschewing of our trouble and great costs and charges that we have, and may grow hereafter; it is thought here that if my Lord of Norfolk would take upon him for you, and that he may have a commission for to inquire of such riots and robberies as hath been done to you and other in this country, that then all the country will await upon him and serve your intent, for the people loveth and dreadeth him more than any other lord, except the king and my Lord of Warwick, &c.

God have you in his keeping, and send us good tidings from you. Written in haste, upon the Sunday Saint Simon and Jude's even.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Sunday,
27th of October, 1465.
5 E IV.

LETTER CCXXXIX.—(LIX. vol. iv. p. 233.)

There is no direction to this letter, but the line which precedes it is written in an ancient hand upon the back of it. The first imprisonment of John Paston was in consequence of a writ of trespass brought against him by William Jenny, Esq., serjeant-at-law, in Easter Term, 4 E. IV. 1464, when the issue being found for the plaintiff, a *capias pro fine* was awarded for the king; Paston absconded, and the exigent was awarded and directed to the sheriff of Suffolk, and he was called at four county courts; but before the fifth he surrendered himself and was committed to the Fleet. The second was in 1465, upon a vile suggestion that he was a bondsman of the king. He died in London the 26th of May, 1466, and was buried in the Priory of Bromholm, in Norfolk.

A letter to John Paston, Esq., from his wife, showing his imprisonment in the Fleet.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I received your letter that ye sent me by John Holme on Wednesday last past, and also I received another letter on Friday at night that ye sent me by Nicholas Newman's man, of the which letters I thank you, for I should else have thought that it had been worse with you than it hath been or shall be, by the grace of Almighty God, and yet I could not be merry since I had the last letter, till this day that the mayor sent to me, and sent me word that

he had knowledge for very truth that ye were delivered out of the Fleet; and that Howard was committed to ward for divers great complaints that were made to the king of him; it was talked in Norwich and in divers other places in the country on Saturday last past that ye were committed to the Fleet, and in good faith, as I have heard say, the people was right sorry thereof, both of Norwich and in the country, ye are right much bound to thank God, and all those that love you, that ye have so great love of the people as ye have; ye are much beholden to the mayor,² and to

¹ If we may judge from the mention of snow here, the winters began earlier at this period than at the present seasons, we having very rarely now any considerable fall of snow before Christmas.

² Thomas Ellis was Mayor of Norwich in 1460, and again in 1465.

Gilbert,¹ and to divers others of the aldermen, for fully they owe you good will to their powers.

I have spoken with Sir Thomas Howes for such things as ye wrote to me for, and he promised me that he should labour it after your intent as fast as he could, and in good faith, as my brother and Playters can tell you, as by his saying to us he is and will be faithful to you; and as for William Worcester he hath been set so upon the hone,² what by the parson and by others, as my brother and Playters shall tell you, that they hope he will do well enough; the parson said right well and plainly to him. The parson told me that he had spoken with Sir William Chamberlayn, and with his wife, and he thinketh that they will do well enough after your intent so that they be pleasantly entreated; and the parson told me that he wist well that Sir William Chamberlayn could do more ease in such matters as ye wrote of touching my Lord of Bedford than any man could do that liveth at this day; also he told me that he felt by them that they would owe you right good will, so that ye would owe them good will; the parson hopeth verily to make you accorded when he cometh to London.

Item, my brother and Playters were with Calthorpe to inquire of the matter that ye wrote to me of, what answer he gave them they shall tell you; I sent the parson of Heylesdon³ to Gurney⁴ to speak to him of the same matter, and he saith faithfully there was no such thing desired of him, and though it had been desired, he would neither have said nor done against you; he said he had ever found you loving and faithful to him, and so he said he would be to you to his power, and desiring me that I would not think him the contrary.

As for John Gros he is at Sloley, therefore he might not be spoken with.

¹ John Gilbert had been mayor in 1459 and in 1464. He died in 1472.

² This expression is taken from setting a razor, and means that he had been talked to not only in a smooth, but likewise in a sharp and severe manner.

³ Thomas Hert was instituted to the rectory of Heylesdon in 1448.

⁴ Thomas Gurney, of Norwich, Esq., died in 1471.

I pray you that ye will send me word whether ye will that I shall remove from hence, for it beginneth to wax a cold abiding here. Sir Thomas Howes and John Russ shall make an end of all things after your intent, as much as they can do therein this week, and he proposeth to come forwards to you on the Monday next after St. Leonard's day.

My brother and Playters should have been with you ere this time, but that they would abide till this day were past, because of the shire. I spoke to my brother William as ye bade me, and he told me, so God him help, that he hired two horses two days before that ye rode that he might have ridden forth with you; and because that ye spoke not to him to ride with you, he said that he wend ye would⁵ have had him with you.

Thomas⁶ Fastolf's mother was here on the next day after ye were ridden, to have spoken with you for her son, he (and) she prayeth you at the reverence of God that ye will be his good master, and to help him in his right, that he may have home his livelihood out of their hands that have it in his nonage; she saith that they would make him a year younger than he is, but she saith that he is more than twenty-one, and upon that she dare take an oath.

And the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters, and send ye victory of all your enemies. Written in haste, on Soulmas⁷ day.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Soulmas day,
2d of November, 1465. 5 E. IV.

⁵ The word *not* seems here to have been omitted in the original letter. [In the original "he seyde yt he woud ye wold have had hym wt yow." Meaning we think—and because you did not ask him to ride with you, he had said that he thought or wished ye would have had him with you.]

⁶ I am not certain in what degree of relationship this Thomas Fastolf stood to Sir John Fastolf; he was, I believe, a cousin, and a Suffolk branch of the Fastolf family, as a Thomas Fastolf resided near Ipswich in 1474. See Letter lxx. p. 54.

⁷ All-souls, otherwise Soulmas day, 2d of November.

LETTER CCXL.—(LX. vol. iv. p. 241.)

John Wymondham, Esq., the writer of this letter, married Margery, the daughter of Sir Robert Clifton, knight, of Denver, in Norfolk, and widow of Sir Edward Hastings, of Elsing, knight; he therefore calls her "my lady." He died in 1475. He purchased the manor and estate at Felbrigg of the trustees of Sir Simon Felbrigg, where he had resided; but once in his absence Sir John Felbrigg made a forcible entry, and dragging out his lady by the hair of her head (who had locked herself up in a chamber to keep possession), got into possession, and retained it till Wymondham obtained the king's order to Thomas Montgomery, Esq., high-sheriff of the county, to put him again into possession. The dispute was then settled with Sir John Felbrigg, and upon Wymondham's paying to him two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) he released all claims, &c. This letter seems to have been written during the time that he was dispossessed of Felbrigg, and which must have been either before the year 1461 or 1466, those being the years in which Sir Thomas Montgomery was sheriff of Norfolk; and as J. Paston at this time seems to have been under misfortunes, it was probably near the latter year. I have therefore ventured, though doubtfully, to date the letter in 1465. This letter is curious, as it acquaints us with the ordinary and plain manners of the time.

To my worshipful cousin, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I commend me to you; and forasmuch as there was a child dead at Astley's, and another like to be dead in the same place, what time that I rode out about my little livelihood, my lady and I both thought pity on my mistress your wife to see her abide there, and desired her to come to my poor house unto such time as ye should a be otherwise avised (*provided*), which if it please you I am right well apayed (*contented*).

Sythen (*since*) I understand by my lady that ye desire to know whether that I should abide here still or not; as to that I have none other place that I would abide at, and my lady saith how she is avised to end her life here; also she saith how ye desire to have a stable within my place; and as to that, a faith, Sir, I have none but that must needs serve for my wood; as for a chamber ye shall have one for your men all ready; and as

touching a stable Sir John Sparham and I have gotten you one there (*where*) your horse stood the last time ye were in this town, and an house to lay in hay and straw, and cost you not (*nothing*) but making of a rack and a manger, and more to your ease there than here; and if ye will that it be made ready for you, send word by the bringer of this letter. And, cousin, as touching to payment, I cannot say how ye shall be pleased with my poor fare, but after that ye are come home and are acquainted therewith, we shall so accord as shall be pleasure to us both; with the grace of God, which have (*you*) in his blessed governance, and send you your mother's blessing.

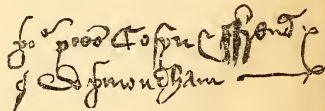
Written at Norwich, on Saint Martin's even.

Your poor cousin and friend,

J. WYMONDHAM.

And how that ever ye do, hold up your manship.

Norwich,
0th of November, 1465.
5 E. IV.

a  *to good to my cousin*
J. Wymondham

LETTER CCXLI.—(LXI. vol. iv. p. 243.)

I have given this letter to show the estimation that John Paston's assistance was held in; for the present of an hundred marks to secure his friendship was a very large sum in these days. From this letter we are likewise acquainted with the disputes subsisting between Felbrigg and Wymondham. The date cannot be clearly ascertained, but I have placed it in the January after J. Wymondham's letter, but whether rightly or not I cannot say.

To my cousin, Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful cousin, I commend me unto you, desiring to hear of

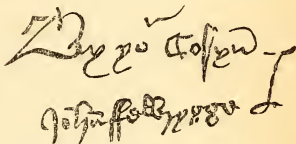
your welfare, the which the Almighty Jesu preserve to his pleasure, and to your own

heart's desires; furthermore, and if it please your gentleness to be my trusty friend, as my full trust is in you, as for such matters as the bringer of this letter shall inform you, and be effectually my friend and bring it about, and by my truth I shall give you an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for your labour; for in truth I am afraid that Robert Radcliff hath deceived me, for he laboured to me daily by my lord's commandment of Warwick, and brought with him Illingworth and other of my lord's counsel, and saw my evidences; and so we stood upon appointment, and I for to have had an answer sent to Felbrigge Hall, and if ne had been (*if it had not been*) for defending of my lord's lordship, I might have had my money for my right ere I came out of London, as my man shall inform you; for in truth I must now make a shift, for Wymondham hath sold his right, and rather than it should go that way too I had lever (*rather*) my lord had it two hundred marks

(133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) within the price that I granted it last, and therefore I beseech you to labour to my lord that I may have an answer. And these many towns¹ belongeth thereto (*namely*), Felbrigge, Aylmerton, Runtun, Colby, Banningham, Iugworth, Sturston, besides hamlets. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Felbrigge, the Monday after Saint Agnes's day.

By your cousin,

JOHN FELBRIGGE.



Felbrigge, Monday, 27th of
January, 1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLII.—(LXII. vol. iv. p. 247.)

Though this letter contains nothing very curious, yet the easy style of it, and the news of the day which it announces to Sir J. Paston, make it worthy the reader's notice. His father's unkindness is likewise just hinted. This writer had an appointment in the household of Edward IV., and it may be supposed, from the concluding part of this letter, that Sir John Paston belonged to it likewise.

Unto the right worshipful master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and my especial good master, I recommend me unto your good mastership, letting you weet that the bearer hereof told me that ye had great marvel that I send to you no word nor letter of answer of the letters that ye had sent to me to London; as for one letter ye sent to me by Richard Players' man, and thereof I sent you an answer in a letter by a man of the Prior of Bromholm, and as for other letters there came no more to me but that one.

Item, Master Flemming looketh daily for his horse, and at every time that I meet with him be asketh of me when his horse should come, and when I heard any word from you; wherefore I pray you send me word in a letter how he shall be answered, and if the horse shall come let me know when, for and (*if*) he had not trusted thereupon he would have purveyed him in another place, &c.

Item, John Oter is not yet paid, but as I

suppose it shall not be long to till he have it, for he hath spoken to my master your father again therefore; and as for Gilmyn he hath not spoken to my master as yet, &c.

Item, I trust he will be your good father, for John Say hath told him plainly of his demeaning against you, and told him that he had the less favour for your sake, &c.

Item, the Earl of Arundel's son² hath wedded the queen's sister.

Item, the Lord Lovel's son³ hath wedded my Lady Fitzhugh's daughter, &c.

¹ I suppose this refers to manorial rights extending into these towns [or townships], &c.

² Thomas Fitz Alan, Lord Maltravers, eldest son of William Fitz Alan, Earl of Arundel, married Margaret, second daughter of Richard Widville, Earl Rivers, and sister to Elizabeth, queen of Edward IV. He succeeded his father as Earl of Arundel in 1487. 3 H. VII., and died in 1524, 16 H. VIII.

³ Francis Lovel, son and heir to John Lord Lovel, married Anne, daughter of Henry Lord Fitz Hugh.

Item, Jenney desireth a treaty with my master, and spake to my master thereof himself in Westminster Hall.

Item, all fellows in the king's house fareth well, and would have you there. No more

London, Monday, 17th of
February, 1465. 5 E. IV.

to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you (*in*) keeping. Written at London, the Monday next after Saint Valentine.

Your servant,

JOHN WYKES.

John Wykes.

LETTER CCXLIII.—(LXIII. vol. iv. p. 251.)

We here find that John Paston was one of the counsel to John Mowbray, the last Duke of Norfolk of that name; and that regular summonses were sent to those in this confidential station when any matters of importance arose on which their deliberations and advice became necessary; this summons appears to be on some very material business, which most probably required secrecy as the purport of it was not communicated, but deferred till he should be arrived at Framlingham.

To our right trusty and entirely well-beloved servant, John Paston, the elder.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT trusty and entirely well-beloved servant, we greet you heartily well, and specially praying you that ye will be with us at Framlingham on Sunday next coming, that we may commune with you there, and have your sad (*serious*) advice in such matters as concerneth greatly to our weal, which shall be ministered (*made known*) unto you at your coming.

Praying you that ye fail not hereof, as our special trust is in you; and our Lord preserve you in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham, the 31st day of August.

NORFOLK.

Framlingham, 31st of
August, before 1466.
6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLIV.—(I. Appendix, vol. ii. p. 289.)

The tidings contained in this letter Margaret Paston thought of sufficient consequence, as her son appears to have been on his way to join these forces, to send in a letter to her husband, though she had left him only that day. This letter was written before 1466, for in that year her husband, J. Paston, died.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

PLEASETH you to weet, that John Welles and his brother told me this night that the kingly ay at Cambridge as yesternight, to Sandwiche ward for there is great division betwixt the lords and the shipmen there that causeth him to go thither to see a remedy therefore.

I thank God that John Paston went not earlier forth, for I trust to God all shall be

done ere he cometh; and it is told me that Sir John Howard is like to lose his head.

If it please you to send to the said Welles, he shall send you more tidings than I may write at this time.

God have you in his keeping.

Written in haste at Thetford, at 11 of the clock in the night the same day I departed fro you.

I thank Pampynge of his good will, and them that were cause of changing of my horse; for they did me a better turn than I weend they had done, and I shall acquit (*requite*) them another day and I may.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Thetford, before 1466.
6 E. IV.

He very soon succeeded his father as Lord Lovel, and was afterwards created Viscount Lovel. This nobleman was lord chamberlain to Richard III., whom he attended at Bosworth Field, and was killed at the battle of Stoke in 1487, 2 H. VII. [He was the "Lovel our dog," of the rhyme,—

"The cat, the rat, and Lovel our dog,
Rule all England under the hog,"

Alluding to Catesby, Ratcliffe, and Richard III.'s cognizance of a white boar.]

LETTER CCXLV.—(LXIV. vol. iv. p. 253.)

This and the following letter were written by Roger Taverham, a descendant of a family of that name, long before this time seated at Taverham in Norfolk. He was now resident at Salisbury, and was going on a pilgrimage to Rome and other holy places, with an intention never to return to England. The style and spelling of the letters come near to those of modern times. The methods then in use by which property was conveyed are here fully related, and are matters worthy of attention of the lawyer and antiquary, and on that account I have thought the contents of these letters worth preserving. The letters seem written from the heart, and express the gratitude of one who in his youth had received countenance and protection from the person to whom he now wishes to return the obligations he thought due to him. It does not appear with what lord he now dwelt at Salisbury.

To my reverend and most-betrusted master, John Paston, Esq., dwelling in the Inner Temple, be this delivered.

RIGHT reverend and most betruſted maſter, I recommend me in the moſt lowly wiſe unto your good and proved maſterſhip, and deſiring many days to hear of your welfare, which I beſeech God increaſe unto his pleaſance and unto the proſperity and welfare of your perſon and of all yours. And I beſeech you of the good continuance of your maſterſhip at divers times before this writing ſhewed unto me; and, Sir, there is none man alive that I truſt more to than I do unto you, and I am your beaſdman, and ſo ſhall remain by the grace of God all the days of mine life; and, Sir, I ſuppoſe I ſhall never ſee you no more, nor none of mine friends, which is to me the greateſt lamentation that might come unto mine heart, for, Sir, by the grace of God I ſhall go to Rome, and into other holy places, to ſpend mine days of this preſent life in the ſervice of God; for I had lever¹ (*rather*) live in great tribulation in the ſervice of God in this preſent life, than for to follow the wretchedneſs of this world.

And, Sir, of one thing I beſeech ſpecially your good maſterſhip, that ye will ſhow your good maſterſhip unto my father in time of his need, and that ye will recommend me in the moſt lowly wiſe with all reverence unto his good fatherhood, beſeeching him that he will give me every day, during the days of his life, his paternal bleſſing; and I have marvel ſan (*ſince*) that I have written ſo many letters unto him before this time that I had never none letter again, which is to me the greateſt lamentation that ever came

to my heart; and now knowing that I ſhall never ſee him more, nor you, nor none other of mine friends, marvel ye not that ſorrow is impreſſed (*impressed*) in mine heart.

But, reverend maſter, mine ſingular truſt remaineth now in your perſon, for, Sir, and (*if*) it pleaſe you, I muſt needs write unto your good maſterſhip, in the which my moſt truſt remaineth; for, Sir, and (*if*) it pleaſe you, as for mine inheritance and other things which ſhould come to me after the death of my father, whoſe life God preſerve to his long pleaſance! knowing that I ſhall never come there, I had lever that by your good advice that ye would take it unto you, for I had lever that ye had it rather than any perſon in the world during my life, with all the profits thereof, and if that ye will make as good evidences (*title*) for you in that part as ye can, and I ſhall ſeal them; and as to you ſeemeth beſt, and in the moſt ſecret wiſe, rule you in this matter.

And, Sir, I beſeech you to recommend me in the moſt lowly wiſe to mine reverend maſter William Lumnor, ſaying him (*telling him*) that I am and ſhall be his perpetual beaſdman, and as ye think beſt ye may tell him of all theſe matters; and, Sir, I beſeech you to recommend me with all reverence unto my miſtreſs your wife, and to all other maſters and friends there; and for that ye will thank the bringer of this letter which hath been in my great tribulation my good friend; and, Sir, when ye ſpeak with my father recommend me unto him with all reverence, and ſay unto him I ſhall ſend him a letter in all haſte poſſible.

And, Sir, as for this matter demean you as ye will, and I ſhall do your pleaſance as

¹ [This word is the German *lieber*—rather, and is ſtill uſed, though probably become a vulgariſm, in the phraſe “I had as *lief*.”]

much as in me is; and, reverend master, remit me some letter by the bringer hereof of all these matters, for he dwelleth with my lord, and he is right much bestrusted, for I know well he will give attendance unto you for to have some letter from you; for, Sir, it shall not be long ere that I go to Rome by the grace of God; and as soon as I have a letter from you at this time I shall send you another again.

No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his blessed keeping. Written at Sarum, the Monday after Midsummer day. And let these matters be kept secret by your best advice.

By your poor Servant,

ROGER TAVERHAM.

Salisbury, Monday, June,
before 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLVI.—(LXV. vol. iv. p. 259.)

[This letter is from the same person as the last, and is remarkable as showing that the heir of a considerable lauded estate could live in England, and write many letters to his father, without receiving intelligence that he had been dead "long tyme passed."]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto your mastership, and I thank your mastership that it pleased your mastership to send me word again of my letter that I sent you by the bringer hereof. Sir, as I am informed ye sent me word how that my father was dead long time passed, and also ye desired to know my title of right; Sir, I am very heir by the decease of my father to a place called Keswick, in Taverham, with all the appurtenances, and that cometh by inheritance and descent to me, for I am the elder and heir; and though my Lord Cromwell¹ hath taken Thomas Taverham, my younger brother, as ward for the same inheritance, that maketh no matter to me, inasmuch (*as*) I am elder brother; wherefore I beseech you to send me a letter of attorney, made to you in my name, in the strongest wise that ye can, for to enter into the same livelihood, and I shall assaile that, and then I shall do my service and fealty to the said Lord Cromwell in all things as by the tenure of the same livelihood of old time ought to be done; and herein I know well the king shall cause my Lord Cromwell to do me both law and right; and also my Lord Chancellor, with other lords divers shall do the same; and, Sir, I beseech your mastership to do and to take possession in the

said place with the appurtenances in short time, for losing² of the rent this year passed.

And, Sir, as for the place of Attlebridge that my mother-in-law now dwelleth in, Sir, your mastership shall right not attempt there now in, for my Lord of Warwick³ hath seen how the same place was given me by testament, by Sir Roger Dalling, after the decease of my father, which is ready to be showed; and thereupon my Lord of Warwick hath commanded certain gentlemen to enter in the same place, and your mastership had been moved therein ere this, but for cause that ye love well Lunnor,⁴ and that my mother-in-law is his sister; but I know well it will cost three hundred pounds but that she shall be dispossessed of that place in short time; and, master, how ye will be ruled in the said place of Keswick I beseech you to send me word, as my singular trust is in you, for and (*if*) ye would not take possession in the said place, my Lord Wenlock⁵ would have that full fain, for all the country knoweth that while I live I am heir and none other, and therefore I beseech you in all haste send me

² [In order not to lose.]

³ Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

⁴ William Lunnor, of Mannington, in Norfolk.

⁵ John Wenlock was created Baron Wenlock in 1461, by Edward IV., but he afterwards left the York party, and joined that of Lancaster; he was cleft down with a battle-axe by the Duke of Somerset, for not coming up in time at the battle of Tewkesbury, in 1471, whereby that battle was lost.

¹ Humphry Bouchier Lord Cromwell, so created in 1461.

word by the bringer hereof in haste, quia mora trahit periculum, and, Sir, I would come (and) speak with you; I am sick and may not go; but tell the bringer hereof all your intent, for my life during I had lever (*rather*)

that ye had that place for one penny than another man though he would give me much money, for your mastership showed to me in my young age, and God keep you, &c.

Your chaplain, ROGER TAVERHAM.

July, before 1466.

6 E. IV.

*yo Thapleyn Roger
Taverham*

LETTER CCXLVII.—(LXVI. vol. iv. p. 263.)

This appears not to have been the first letter which J. Paston had received relative to the behaviour of his cousin Mary. It seems by it that she had happened of an accident too common in our age, but which, in the times here treated of, was looked upon as disgraceful in a high degree, not only to the person but likewise to her family and friends. I wish the shame of it was more attended to now than it is, as that would perhaps prevent the ruin of many young people of both sexes; and in most cases of this kind the female, for the first offence, is generally entitled to our pity, however abandoned she may become afterwards. I am sorry, as an acting magistrate, to say that licentiousness in this respect is an increasing evil, affecting not only the morals of the lower classes in an amazing degree, but adding considerably to the already enormous burden of the poor rates. [It is not easy to say what Sir John here desires. He says he wishes "the shame of it was more attended to than it now is," but adds, "the female, for the first offence, is generally entitled to our pity." We doubt the correctness of his experience as an "acting magistrate," as to licentiousness being an increasing evil; but the recent alteration in the poor laws has no doubt afforded a great correction of the evil, whatever it was. We believe also that the "disgrace" in a respectable family is felt as acutely now, if not more acutely, than ever; the result of an increased delicacy of feeling arising from a more extended and better education.]

Be this delivered to Master John Paston.

I RECOMMEND me unto you as unknown; and as for the writing I send unto you, the cause why it was not endorsed was, for the bearer thereof knew you well enough, and as for your cousin Mary she is no longer with us, as upon Saint Matthew's even she departed from me and went to Audrey Croxton; and she told me that ye would pay for her board there; but one thing I let you know, she hath demeaned her full simply, both for your worship and also for her own; there is but few within our place but they know how it is with her, and all by her own

business of her tongue. And (if) I had known as much at the beginning as I have done since, I would not have dealt in the matter not for forty pounds, for I wis she is nothing so sad [*serious*] as I would she were. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Ghost have you in his keeping and send you your heart's ease; I pray you heartily I may speak with you. B. D. M. S.

No exact date of the year can be affixed to this letter, which appears to have been written in September or October, before 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLVIII.—(LXVII. vol. iv. p. 265.)

I have given this letter to show the very great repute in which the liquor here mentioned was held at this time: Sir John Paston's observations to prove it genuine manifest the esteem in which it stood as a cordial. Geane, Gin, or Geneva (if that be the thing here meant), is a compound water, procured from the berries of the juniper, distilled with brandy or malt spirits, and was for many years drank in improper quantities by the lower order of people in this kingdom, and attended with very pernicious effects; as a medicine it has now its uses. In a letter which I have examined since I copied the above, I find the following order:—"I pray yow send me by the next man that comyth fro London ij pottys of tryacle of Ienne, they shall

cost xvjd." I believe I am mistaken, therefore, in calling the medicine mentioned in this letter Gin or Geneva; it seems from this last extract to be treacle of Genoa, a city in Italy, from whence various drugs and medicines are imported. This letter has no date, and the subscribing signature is torn off; it was, however, written by Sir John Paston to his mother in the reign of Edward IV. [The last explanation seems the true one; they would hardly send Geneva in treacle pots, nor in so very small a quantity, nor through an apothecary. It was more probably a medicated treacle.]

To Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it you to weet that I send you by Barker, the bearer hereof, three treacle pots of Geane as my apothecary sweareth unto me, and moreover that they were never undone since they came from Geane, whereof ye shall take as many as pleaseth you, nevertheless my brother John sent to me for two, therefore I must beseech you that he may have at the least one; there is one pot that is marked under the bottom two times, with these letters M. P., which pot I have best trust unto, and next him to the wryghe (q.

twisted) pot, and I mistrust most the pot that hath a krott (*q. a crack, or piece chipt off*) above on the top, lest that he hath been undone; and also the other two pots be printed with the merchant's mark two times on the covering, and that other pot is but once marked but with one print; notwithstanding I had like oath and promise for one as well as for all.

JOHN PASTON.

Between 1460 and 1470.
1 and 10 E. IV.

END OF VOL. I.

